

NEW!

TOMB RAIDER SECRETS CRASH COMPLETED!

PLAYSTATION PRO

ISSUE 4 February 1997 £2.95

REVEALED!
THE ULTIMATE
PLAYSTATION
SET-UP

MECHWARRIOR 2

IT'S PSYCHOSOMATIC
ADDICT INSANE!

SWAGMAN

RELOADED

COOL BOARDERS

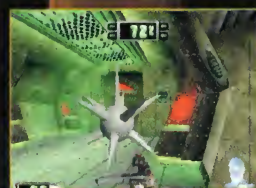
TOBAL NO.1

PERFECT WEAPON

ISSN 1364-8950



VIRTUAL POOL SENTIENT EXCALIBUR 3000 LEGACY OF KAIN AYRTON SENNA



PLAYSTATION PRO

Will nobody rid me of this troublesome intro bit? For goodness sake, it's nine o'clock at night and the mag's got to be at the printers any minute now. Here I am, bags packed, coat on, all ready to run off home for a quick two player game of Namco Smash Court Tennis and I'm called back to fill this piddly little intro bit because Interplay has decided to run the Disruptor ad for the third month running. Flippin' heck. It's a dog's life working here I can tell you. Playing games all day, getting free gifts from all the software houses and having cups of tea made for me all day by gorgeous looking chicks. Skill, can't complain - I'm off to America in a few months and by the time the next mag's out (February 13) I'll be a Dad. Yes, it's not all work, work, work. You heard it here first. Thanks for reading this - you're probably the only one - and thanks for buying the mag. You're not alone in that respect. See ya next month

Alex

DISRUPTOR™

"Disruptor... is a challenging, atmospheric and at times, bloody terrifying experience." 8/10

Official Playstation

"It's just too much. Doom I could handle. Even Alien Trilogy came and went without too much trouble. But Disruptor has too many levels to explore, too many aliens to fight. I don't think I can last much longer!"

Playstation Plus

"Imagine my delight when Disruptor arrives looking completely cool, sounding smart, and playing like a god-damned action fest!"

"A right old corker"

Mean Machines Playstation

"...the best I've seen yet." 91%

Total Playstation

Interplay

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BMG Interactive's vampire adventure is on its way soon, but until then sit back and enjoy our exclusive preview

56 Core, It's Swagman!

Core Design's latest involves a spooky dream catcher and loads of little blokes running around in top Toejam & Earl-type landscapes. Honest!

58 Virtual Swimming

Interplay enjoyed a great deal of success with its PC version of this smoky pub sport and now hope to hustle with the PlayStation version

60 Save Game

If you read our exclusive feature last month you'll know Sentient, from Psygnosis, is the game to look out for in the New Year. Have another look at it inside



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Win an entire army! Or something 20

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Hot gossip on the year ahead, tomorrow's latest stories today and what the future holds for your console is all in our red-hot news pages. Read on for all the information you need to ensure 1997 is the best year for PlayStation and for you

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Virgin and PSPro give away a day out driving tanks, plus 20 copies of Command & Conquer!

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You write in, we print your letters and then laugh at your stupidity. No really, we love receiving your letters. Oh we do

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The part of the mag where we show you all the games currently available and tell you what we think of each and every one of 'em



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Mech Warrior 2 brought Activision praise from the industry and lots of coin from the punters. Now you can check out the PlayStation conversion in our top preview

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Wreckin' Racing and Excalibur 3000 show their faces in this in-depth look at what Telstar has to offer for the rest of the year

66 One Man Crusade

The bullet-blazing PC smash hit has been beautifully converted to your machine, so be grateful as we unveil EA's Crusader: No Remorse

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68 Cheat, Drink & Be Merry!

Your regular monthly portion of steaming tippage pudding is now being served at your usual table, sir. Allow us to take your coat as you sit yourself down, widen your gullet and prepare yourself for all the greasy cheats you'll ever need. Burp!

70 The Definitive Crash Bandicoot Players Guide

From start to finish, all the hidden levels, all the gems, all the keys and every hop, skip and jump you need to perform is detailed in our fabulous comprehensive player's guide to the platform game of the year

86 Tomb Raider: The Secrets

We gave you the biggest complete guide - direct from the makers - last issue and now we spoil you some more with all the secret bits from the entire game



COVER STORY

Hey, Big Spender! 48



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Fade To Black meets Tekken in the pub, they then bump into Resident Evil on the way to the toilets and end up making this game inside one of the cubicles – but how?

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Grab your board, don your bubble jacket and prepare to get phat on the icy slopes as Sony gives you the first snowboarding simulation ever

20 Tobal No. 1

Not all that fancy graphics-wise (so Jay reckons), but this new beat 'em-up from the boys at Sony HQ certainly has the edge on most 3-D fighters. Kick some polygon ass!

24 Ayrton Senna Kart Duel

He may be dead, but his spirit lives on. Now you can indulge in Ayrton's go karting feast and enjoy the thrill of racing a faulty lawnmower two inches from the ground

28 Reloaded

Blood-soaked bodies and bullets a go-go. Gremlin's wacky-angled search and destroy shoot 'em-up is back on your favourite console in a new and improved form. Yowsa!

32 NBA In The Zone 2

What? Another basketball game, already? Yes, we're afraid so, but this effort from the boys at Konami HQ may just surprise you

34 Namco Smash Court Tennis

Currently the office favourite, this reworked version of the old SNES tennis classic is the dog's dangly bits. With jam on. And hundreds and thousands too. And chocolate flavour strands...

38 International Superstar Soccer Deluxe

Football came home last year and now Konami is asking you to put up this one in the spare room as a permanent lodger. Is it any good? Find out inside

42 Blazing Dragons

BMG enter the world of the point and click adventure with this comedy tale of a hapless dragon who dreams of becoming a knight. Sounds treat. Ahem

44 Namco Museum Volume 3

Step back in time once again and let Namco take you on a guided tour around its cyber-museum packed full to the brim of ancient arcade time-wasters

**EVERY GAME
RANKED AND RATED BY
FIVE EXPERTS!**

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48 Hey, Big Spender!

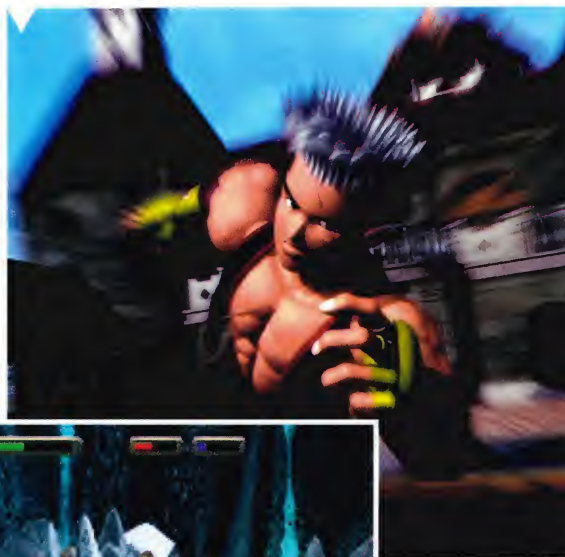
Imagine you had all the money in the world. Now imagine what wonderful goodies you could buy for your PlayStation. Now turn to page 48 and all your peripheral dreams will come true, in our add-on round up of the year

52 How Was It For You?

This is the chance to vote for your favourite gaming moments of 1996 – the Pros offer you the chance to give your opinion and win something treat for doing so!

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REVIEWED Perfect Weapon

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"COOL BOARDERS IS SUPERB".

Mean Machines PlayStation

COOL BOARDERS



"Cool Boarders is the top one-player sports game on the PlayStation"
PlayStation Plus 91%



It's All Happening In Japan!



CHORO Q 2 is a typical Ridge Racer-style release. Could well come out over here



RUNNING HIGH would go down a storm in Britain, we reckon – arace game with humans, not cars



MEGAMAN'S back! This time, he's in a Mario Kart-style racer



POWER MOVE PRO WRESTLING went down a storm here with its simplistic gameplay. A sequel could follow sooner rather than later



The Japanese PlayStation market is weird. It seems they'll buy anything, particularly if you or I think it's rubbish. Puzzle games, for example, go down an absolute treat over there as do Zelda style adventure releases.

The only Japanese titles that ever really make a big impact over here are the from the sports and racing genres and, to a lesser extent, beat'em-ups. It's in this special report from Japan that we reveal the hottest titles that have a fighting chance of being released over here.

Running High, from Rex Entertainment/Sacom, is a racing game due out over there in March. During the PlayStation Expo (2 – 4 Nov), this sleeper hit caught many people's attention with its bizarre and exciting gameplay. It is basically a racing game similar to *Ridge Racer*, but instead of cars, the vehicles are all human with enhanced armour – this is the game's USP.

The game is set in the near future where a special type of armour has been developed for military use. With pressure from countries all over the world, this plan is stopped and scaled down for commercial use. Later on, it is gradually used for a competition called Running High. There are six characters for selection in the game. Your characters can run as fast as cars with the special boosters, armour and other components. Unlike other racing games, there is a storyline and ending unique to each character.

New Japan Pro Wrestling: Toukon Retsuden 2 from Tomy/NJP/Yukels is the follow-up to *Power Move Pro Wrestling* (published by Activision over here) which Dan loved so much. If you have played PMPW, you already know the variety of moves and animation of characters that made this game popular.

The sequel features improved graphics with better and more realistic animation, more characters for selection (over 20), more camera angles and twice the moves (over 300 different moves for all characters). The major enhancement, however, has to be the four player mode. You and a friend can co-operate and perform combination moves together. Expect to see it over here in time for Christmas '97.

Besides the Ridge Racer series, *Choro Q* (another racing game) is also popular in Japan. *Choro Q 2*, the sequel, is out in the Spring over there. It features a greater variety of tracks such as the small town (Imagine driving through a small European town where the streets are narrow and undulating) and a cross-island bridge. Like the first, there are some hidden tracks within the regular tracks which add more fun and longevity. There are over 60 cars to choose from, plus you can upgrade your car part by part. You can press the horn too. Beep beep...

Mediaquest's *Drift King Gaiden: Super Technic Challenge* is the second Drift King game for the PlayStation and seems to have been improved quite a lot. Other racing games use money when you want to upgrade your car, but in this one, you accrue points. To make it more realistic, your racing career starts from 1 January and for every week hence, you get to practice to earn upgrade points. In certain months, when tournaments are on, you have to finish in the first four in order to advance to the next tournament. Throughout the game you get advice from various people which you can ignore at your peril. British punters would love this, but as there are already two in the series on sale in the land of the Rising Sun it's not too likely we'll see a Brit version. Fingers crossed, though, eh?

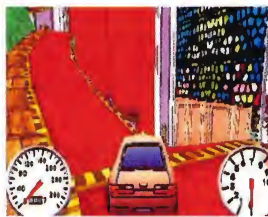
Aques' (Advanced Quality of Entertainment & Sports – a division of Square) *Grand Champion's Rally* is the first racing title that Square is going to release in Japan this spring. The



Below: **DRIFT KING GAIDEN** is much, much better than Tetris Battle Gaiden



CHORO Q 2 looks nothing in still screenshots, but doesn't half move when it's playing



gameplay is similar to Sega Rally, but the major difference is that it runs at 60 frames per second and in high-resolution. Not only are the graphics decent but the backgrounds move smoothly too.

J-League Winning Eleven '97 from Konami is slightly better than its '95 original. There are more formations to choose from, more sound effects, more sampled speech from the commentator and four angle views to choose from. Don't be surprised to see a PAL version later this year.

Ray Tracer from Taito is, surprise surprise, a racing game. It's actually very similar to Taito's old racing game, *Chase HQ*. If you have played *Chase HQ* before, you know it is not only a pure racing game, it also has extra action such as being able to shoot and hit the opponent's car. Using the same formula, this game offers similar gameplay with more excitement.

There are six stages in total and unlike *Chase HQ* where you only have to deal with normal cars, *Ray Tracer* includes criminals who have powerful weapons, such as helicopters and tanks! There are four cars to choose from - Spanker, Hawk, Linx, and Buffalo. Each car has advantages and disadvantages. Spanker, for example, is a well-balanced car with speed and durability. Buffalo, on the other hand, has high durability.

The biggest title of this section has to be Namco's *Rage Racer* - the latest in the ever-popular *Ridge Racer* series. For the first time, you can customise the team logo, team name and colour for your car. There are many sample logos ready to choose from or you can draw your own and texture map it to the car. You can also choose the name for your team with up to six letters.

Another improvement upon the previous two *Ridge Racer* games is the upgrade option. You can earn money to buy parts and upgrade the car. There is also a tune-up service available. So if you have enough money, you can build the ultimate car of your dreams. Already out over there, we'll be reviewing a PAL copy next issue.

Rockman (a.k.a. *Megaman*) *Racer* from Capcom is a split-screen racer - allowing two people to play simultaneously. It's very similar to the famous SNES *Super Mario Kart* in which you can collect power-ups then attack the other cars. Hopefully it'll be out over here with Virgin as the publisher as early as the summer.



RAGE RACER (above) is the latest in the Ridge Racer series. It now features customisable cars



WINNING ELEVEN 2'S players look even more realistic than before

coming soon...

Beltlogger 9

This curious effort from Genki is a first-person shooter whose gameplay and atmospheric style are just like *Kileak the Blood* which was developed by the same team. The story is about the base, *Beltlogger 9*, which has sent out the SOS signal for help.

Inevitably, of course, you are sent to fight the enemies. To be distributed over here by Jaleco before the summer.



Ghost In The Shell

Sony Computer Entertainment's latest is a 3-D action shooter influenced by Manga comics. It's due out in Japan in spring, to

be followed by a British release a few months later. The original creator, Masamune Shirow, is currently re-designing the characters and mechanics. The main character, Motoko



Kusanagi, has a new look, as does its robot companion, Fuchikoma. The computer graphics intro is designed and supervised by Masamune Shirow himself.

Rockman 8 (a.k.a. Megaman 8)

As you already know, PlayStation isn't exactly packed with 2-D action games. In a strange turnaround, Capcom is going to bring out the sequel to this popular series, *Rockman* (for the British market, *Rockman* is known as *Megaman*). By taking advantage of the PlayStation's superb graphics engine, it offers more colours than before, multi-layers and some new special effects. For example, *Rock/Megaman* can now swim underwater in one stage. Capcom has taken advantage of the console's capabilities by using a stunning transparent effect.

Battle Arena Toshinden 3

The story starts with Vermillion, one of the hidden characters of *Toshinden 2*, having joined the ranks of a criminal organisation. There are over 30 characters available in the game, with at least half re-hashed from the first two games. Many of the old characters however, have new special moves, such as *Fo* and *Sophia*.



Dragonball GT

After the Japanese release of Bandai's *Dragonball Legends* a few months ago, some fans were disappointed with the game quality, especially the pixelated graphics and the weak gameplay. Bandai

coming soon...

promises this new 3-D game, based on TV anime Dragonball GT, is to be totally different from the rest of the Dragonball series. Whether it'll be good enough for a British release remains to be seen. Out in Japan this summer.

Rurouni Kenshin

The Manga-style gameplay is similar to Soul Edge with most characters using weapons (mainly swords), but with some



using only their bare hands. The game developers chose to design the characters with low polygons

and texture mapping so better animation can be produced. Coming soon from Sony Computer Entertainment, hopefully under a better title.

Ranma 1/2 - Battle Renaissance

A 3-D beat'em-up developed by Shogakukan, based on Manga – no surprise there. Little is known about this title apart from the fact that the music's pretty good. Don't be surprised if you only ever see it in dodgy import shops and on small mail order advertisements.



Lightning Legend:

Diago's big adventure

Along with Kumite, Konami is coming out a new 3-D fighter this Christmas in Japan. It's nothing more than an interesting 3-D fighter, as it's being pitted against the other famous fighting games, like Namco's Soul Edge and Takara's Toshinden 3 which will probably outsell it.

ZXE-D: Legend of Plasmatlite

Bandai's ZXE-D is, if nothing else, an innovative game for any system – for a start, you don't need a control pad or joystick to play it – you control the plastic



robot that comes with the package. The pack comprises the following bizarre contents – four plastic robots,

eight plastic characters, a special tab and of course the game CD. With all this, it definitely won't come cheap if it ever makes these shores.



Cheat, Cheat, Never Beat

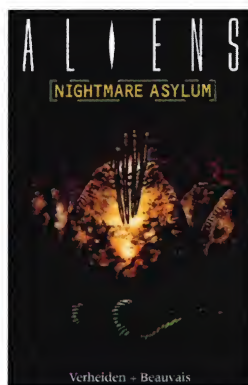
Datel, the company that revolutionised cheating in the 16bit markets, is now firmly established as the number one PlayStation cheat firm. If you've got access to the Internet you're in luck because there's a fully functional Web site at <http://www.datel.co.uk> and for those of you who can only boast a telephone there's a code line going too. It's on 01782 745990. Apparently, there are cheats available for everything from Alien Trilogy to Zero Divide. Remember you've got to buy an Action Replay card first, though (details on page 48).

The Need To Read

Titan Books are on a mission for your money once again as its latest set of excellent graphic novels hit the shelves this month. Batman's back again, this time in the spooktastic halloween tale, Haunted Knight. He's also in the special tenth anniversary hardback edition of the classic Frank Miller novel, The Dark Knight Returns, where Batman comes out of retirement and re-invents himself once again.



Other Titan releases this month include the latest Aliens addition, Nightmare Asylum and the bizarrely entitled Sex & Zen & A Bullet In The Head, which is basically a movie guide for those who enjoy the Hong Kong kung fu flicks of Jackie Chan, John Woo and Chow Yun Fat. The book lists all the currently available chop-socky flicks and gives you a complete rundown on any movie from the genre currently in circulation. All four titles mentioned above are now available to buy and should be purchased almost immediately – if you haven't got 'em already.



Mr Boombastic, Semi-Fantastic

NES owners of the land will have more than likely played one or more of the many Bomberman creations from Hudson Soft/Virgin over the years and no doubt loved them. Now PlayStation owners can grab themselves a taste of some of the best four-player action around as the army of Bombermen march their way onto Sony's little grey wonder machine later this year.

Details on the game are pretty sketchy as present, but rest assured that there'll be loads of explosions, plenty of pulsating four-way reamness and all the much-loved Bomberman brilliance that made the original such a smash hit. It's the one retro-style game that'll stand the test of time.



Above: Two Bombermen primed to explode – but how near you will they be when their bombs go off?

Stop Press

- Ian Botham Cricket, Electronic Arts' attempt at a cricket game for the PlayStation, won't be ready until the autumn. EA won't show us any in-development shots, it looks that bad at the moment. Don't be surprised if Gremlin manages to get Actua Cricket out before the fat, pot-smoking one's version appears.
- Also from EA, Need For Speed 2 is scheduled for

a March release to satisfy the left-foot braking cravings of split screen racing fans everywhere.

Expect to see new cars from Ferrari, Lamborghini and Lotus, to name but three.

■ CTW, the computer industry trade mag that's always useful for space filling facts, recently reported that over 420,000



The second
Resident
Evil
promises
to be even
scarier
than the
original



Resident Evil Sequel

Resident Evil caused a furore with its bloody advertising campaign and went straight in at number one, selling thousands of copies in the process. The sequel's already well underway, with the American NTSC version due out in spring. The Brit PAL version should follow shortly after.

This time round, there's a lot more than just zombies to be concerned about. Set in Raccoon City, Leon Kennedy – rookie cop and investigator extraordinaire – and Elza Walker – 19 year-old college student – try to get to the bottom of the latest outbreak of zombieitis. There's bloodshed and mayhem aplenty as the pair set about stopping the zombies and ultimately Umbrella, the organization that genetically created the disease that's caused the latest zombie outbreak.

Resident Evil 2 looks set to be bigger to the original not only in terms of hours of gaming but unit sales as well – no serious PlayStation gamer is going to want to miss out on this one. Stay with PlayStation Pro for monthly updates.

Hot News From America

Scavenger, the American software company known for its loud parties, has developed a bizarre brand approach to product development. Its goal is to present video gaming fans with games for their specific interests. This year will herald the release of a scuba diving game, Aqua, a fire fighting sim called Pyro, an astronaut'em-up entitled Gemini and a Dungeons and Dragons style release, Into The Shadows.

Not content with those four minority interest titles, Scavenger is to release a game called Tarantula for spider fans, Amok for robot sympathisers, Angel for those interested in the paranormal, Scorchers for lovers of fast bikes, Terminus for fetish fans (can't wait to see that one), Sniper for cop lovers (a specialised genre if ever there was one) and Spanish Blood for those of you turned on by pirates.

As the Scavenger spokesperson Kirsten Brogen said, 'These are universal fantasies we believe will be successful around the world'. Can't argue with that. It's Scavenger's goal to work in conjunction with video games mags around the world, so stay with PlayStation Pro for screenshots, previews and updates of Scavenger's crazily obscure forthcoming product line-up.



Tecno Tecno Tecno Tecno!

TecnoPlus joypads and memory cards could be brilliant. On the other hand, they could be dirt. We don't know, because they didn't have the courtesy to send us any for review. Better turn to page 48 now and read our feature which covers every other PlayStation peripheral going. If you'd like to blindly go out and buy the TecnoPlus game pad, it's £12.99. The 1meg memory cartridge, on the other hand, is £29.99 and the 8meg model £49.99. But you're better off reading the feature first – the photo of all the gear cost us an arm and a leg. It's on page 48.

Left: Tecno Plus' joypad and memory card. Could be fantastic, could be the world's worst...

units of (all format) software had already been sold by the week ending December 7 – that's a record. FIFA 97 (7/10 PlayStation Pro), Tomb Raider (9/10 PlayStation Pro), Die Hard Trilogy (9/10 PSX-Pro) and Formula One (9/10 PSX-Pro) boosted the CD sector by a whopping 28%.

■ Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's sales and marketing director David Reeves told CTW last week Sony is out of PlayStation in Benelux, Italy, Scandinavia

and Spain. Unfortunately for them, there weren't any to buy over Christmas. As Santa would say, 'Ho ho ho'.

■ Broderbund is set to flood the games market with seven new titles this year including Riven, the sequel to multi-format success story Myst, The Last Express,

Koala Lumpur: Journey To The Edge, Warlords III, The Journeyman Project 3, the WarBreeds and Outrage (from Hexen

creators Raven Software). Expect to see at least one of the aforementioned to appear on the PlayStation. Check out next month's news to find out which one(s).

■ CTW's Christmas retail



poll proved beyond any doubt whatsoever that the PlayStation and everything that sails in it is the most important entity in the world of video gaming. Sony was voted to have had the best overall marketing throughout the year. Formula One has proved the top game of the year (only just pipping Tomb Raider for the honour). The PlayStation itself was the best-selling leisure hardware system by a mile – beating the Saturn by a massive 65%.

Sony's Latest Ruse

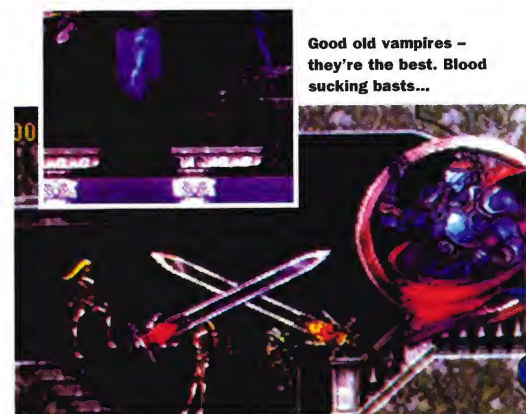
Available to buy any day now over here for the princely sum of £600, the Yarouze black programmable PlayStation is set to revolutionise PlayStation programming, taking game development out of the office and putting it back into the bedroom.

Yarouze, which literally translates as 'Let us create', is the Japanese name for the tools the programming fraternity hopes will recreate the golden age of bedroom game creation. The software package includes a C compiler, a debugger, sound and graphic converting tools and a complete set of C libraries.

Now, from the home, a single PlayStation enthusiast has the power to create games for the cost of a pretty mediocre PC set-up. The Yarouze is actually pretty similar to the grey PlayStation we all know and love, with the main differences being new boot ROMs and no territorial lockout chip – the practical use of this being that you can play Japanese, American or British games without any bother. It differs from the official (blue) development kit in that it has only 2MB of main memory and no CD-ROM emulator or PC board.

Yarouze doesn't allow for any CD storage, so here at PlayStation Pro we're hoping this will lead to a gameplay fest over the next couple of years, rather than a continuation of the obsession with stunning graphical effects. All games will therefore have to load entirely into RAM from the host machine – which isn't all that bad when you consider the likes of the beautiful Ridge Racer fit in easily.

Hopefully a new generation of programming talent will emerge, as well as a whole new genres of games. We can't wait – stay with us for monthly updates.



Good old vampires – they're the best. Blood sucking bastards...

Castlevania Mania

SNES veterans will doubtless have owned, or at least heard of, Konami's much-lauded Castlevania series of games. Those of you who have upgraded to PlayStations will be delighted to hear that Castlevania 5 is on its way – the first Castlevania produced for Sony's wonder console.

Also known as Dracula X: Symphony Of The Night, you may now select one of four characters (instead of having to do with Simon Belmont) including a Belmont-like vampire hunter armed with a whip, Alucard (Dracula's son), a sword-wielding bounty hunter and a (token) peasant girl.

There's a whole new arsenal of weapons to take on the massed forces of evil including axes and daggers, so sharpen your stakes and start stocking up on garlic, for Castlevania 5 should reach the spooky coastal town of Whitby by summertime.

Look At Those Montezumas!

The first rival to Tomb Raider is on its way from a most unlikely source. Utopia Technologies' Montezuma's Return gives you the chance to step into the shoes of a Max Montezuma, a great adventurer on a mission to discover hidden treasures and mysterious artefacts.

A descendant of the emperor of an ancient Aztec civilisation, Max (you) has crash landed on a tropical island and before he can say 'I think I'm suffering from whiplash', he stumbles on a connection between Aztecs and aliens! Like wow! How bizarre. All the action takes place in a real-time 3-D environment that comprises over 500 indoor and outdoor locations populated by over 150 lifelike animated 3-D models.

Montezuma's Return promises to be the first game to accurately portray the forces of gravity, wind and surface friction! Not content with all that, Utopia Technologies is promising an added element – a sense of humour. Can't wait. Due out in America this summer, see next month's mag for details of who's going to be publishing it over here.



Could it be true? Is Tomb Raider up against it already? Stranger things have happened

Stop Press

■ Software developer Attention To Detail (ATD) has pioneered the VSS (Voxel Sprite System), a new 3-D animation technology. Using polygon based rendering it is now possible to achieve stunning textured backgrounds



and well modelled buildings. ATD's VSS is ideal for small, detailed 3-D sprites preserving the detail of the original model while still allowing it to be viewed in real-time from any angle. As VSS is highly memory efficient, designers can increase the number of character

frames, making animations smoother and permitting more movement. Licensing will be on an individual basis given the diversity of potential applications.

■ Micro Machines v3 from Codemasters won't be with us for at least another month. The official excuse for this, from Managing Director Nick Wheelwright, is as follows: 'We will not be compromised on quality by time restraints and we are not prepared to sacrifice elements of the

game design to rush release the title'. Rough translation: 'It still looks dirt even though we've spent pure time and money on it already'.

■ Obscure new romantic combo Vision 2000 have gone back into the studio and their new single is to be a song about the PlayStation. Last heard of in the early eighties, the duo have been in hiding ever since their seminal tune 'Angular Depression' went triple platinum. Watch

Rumours

■ **EA Reboots:** The popular computer-animated kids TV show, Reboot is to be converted into a high-flying PlayStation game later this year by software supremos, Electronic Arts. It will be based around the antics of the show's main character Bob and his usual bunch of Silicon Graphics-computer-animated pals, all hellbent on destroying the evil overloads plans for world domination. Expect screenshots to emerge late summer.



■ **X Marks The Spot:** No surprise this one, but Fox interactive is to go ahead with its forthcoming

X Files title. Unfortunately, it's looking likely the PlayStation version won't be released after all. Spooky.

■ **Mission Implausible?:** After many

months of whispers, closed doors and wild speculation, Ocean Of America still hasn't released any information or screenshots on its up-and-coming megabucks movie licence, Mission Impossible. Will we still be seeing a polygon-based Tom Cruise

lookalike prancing around on top secret fisticuffs missions? Only time will tell.

■ **Nice & Spicy:** Believe or not, Britain's hottest pop act, The Spice Girls, are to star in their very own PlayStation game. The game, provisionally entitled Ziggazigzag! is to feature all the girls in polygon form and has them running round various night clubs, enticing other girls to join the band and telling the fellas all there is to know about 'Girl Power'. Whether the finished article will involve a sub-game where you can quiz the individual band members about their 'glamour model' past has yet to be confirmed.



■ **The Kids Are Not Alright:** Takara's immature twist on the Battle Arena Tohshinden series, Tohshinden Kids, will not be officially released in the UK. The Japanese fan base of the title hasn't been all that impressive, nor have the sales figures. If the Jap kids (who are famous for their obsessions with quirky fighting games) aren't lapping it up, the odds are in favour of the UK gamers giving it the elbow too. All plans for a UK Tohshinden 3 release however, look tye to be coming along nicely.

■ **Bandicoot Bounces**

Back: Whispers in videogame town are saying that Naughty Dog's excellent platform creation, Crash Bandicoot, is to return early next year with a sequel to his smash hit debut.

■ **Alien Arcade Great:** Williams, the chaps responsible for the numerous Mortal Kombat incarnations, are to bring its top

alien-blasting coin-op, Area 51 to the PlayStation. The game is said to utilise the light gun compatibility of the original and is an near-perfect conversion of the arcade beast. All eyes are now on GT Interactive to see whether it will be handling the UK release. More gossip next issue.



Comedy Basic

Fancy winning some excellent New Year viewing utensils? Well, the best way you can go about it is to enter our fabulous video giveaway. On offer we have the amazingly humorous Rowan Atkinson in The Best Bits Of Mr Bean which, as you can imagine, is full of 'hilarious' clips of Mr Bean at the dentist (stop it!), driving his funny yellow car with the padlock on the door (pass the needle and thread) or walking around with a massive turkey stuck to his head (our personal fave). There are a few copies of Game On knocking around too, so if you fancy spending an evening watching Matthew Cottle's funny banter, Ben Chaplin's smoothness or Sam Janus' arse, this is the compo for you!

The last four episodes from series five of 'proper' entertainment show, Men Behaving Badly are also up for grabs. See Gary cop off with the next door neighbour, Tony try to make a sauna out of the garden shed and many more classic comedy moments from the cheeky chappies at the BBC. Lastly, and by no mean least, comes the top prize in our video marathon: Father Ted! If you're a winner, you'll get all of the above plus a copy of the first series to watch over and over again over the coming months and no doubt you'll be laughing non-stop for absolutely ages, so you will.

'So, tell me, how do I stand a chance of winning this fine fare of VHS bounty?' we hear you cry. Well, it's quite simple really. Just send a postcard to the usual address (making sure you cards is marked I HAVE NO LIFE, YET I MUST VIEW) and on the back of it, pop down the name of the bloke who plays Father Jack Hackitt in the very very funny Channel Four series, Father Ted. Thank you and goodnight.



competition winners

From issue one:

T. H. Williams, Rhondra
C. Millar, Dumfries
J. C. Robinson, Plymouth
Lee Sullivan, Ashton under Lyne
Graham Reid, Kemnay

Andrew Coventry, King's Lynn
Wayne Thorpe, Nottingham
Daniel Watts, Norfolk
Gary Walkinshaw, Biggar
Jeremy Cooke, Ealing
Ron Jackson, Stevenage

"SELL YOUR GRANNY AND PLAY TOBAL NO 1 TILL YOUR FINGERS BLEED".

Play 94%

TObAL No.1

"The quest mode is a superb addition to the game, and makes for some late nights as it's really tough to complete"

Mean Machines PlayStation

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DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

Perfect Weapon

He used to be a humble ninja style secret agent, but thanks to the intervention of an alien bloodsport enthusiast, Blake Hunter's life is about to become infinitely stranger



'Gang up on me, would ya?' Blake isn't the sort of guy to back down from a pub car park rumble

Blake Hunter is absolutely rock hard. I mean, he'd have to be with a name like that. You don't get many florists called Blake Hunter, for instance. So it's lucky that the Blake Hunter in question is possibly the Earth Defence Force's top agent. He's also, in his spare time, a world class martial artist and all round expert at 'kicking off'.

He's just super bloody hard. He is, would you believe, the perfect weapon. So perfect in fact that he catches the randy, roving eye of The Overlord. This intergalactic bad egg is a kinda Beavis version of Darth Vader. He's massively powerful, ruling five planets, but he's just so boored, man. All this pillaging planets, like, sucks, y'know?

To entertain himself, he abducts prime

specimens of various species and strands them on his own planets, just to see how they fare against these harsh landscapes. Which is obviously a cracking jape for this Overlord character, but not high on the laugh-o-meter for people like Blake. He suddenly finds himself transported from his changing room after a boxing match to a bizarre icy planet of death.

Luckily, he is a mere passenger in his body for controlling his every movement is a human being with a joystick in their hand. And that's you. Guide Blake through the five domains of The Overlord's kingdom, battling for survival every step of the way, and freedom will be his. And by proxy, yours too.

Thankfully you've got Blake's vast repertoire of martial artistry to fall back on. This gives you over 100 possible fighting moves, ranging from simple punches and kicks right up to vicious combos and throw moves. Some of the moves only become available at certain points in the game, and others need to be sussed out in true fighting game style.

You'll need all the moves you can get your hands on, as Perfect Weapon has an exciting new party trick to wow your pants off. Rather than just indulging in one-on-one thumpo action, it's possible for up to four enemies to gang up on you at once. Not very sporting, but then I don't think that the Queensbury rules have made it as far as the planet Pongo yet.

This isn't much of a problem when you've got a



The baddies energy bars appear across the top right of the screen so I've still got a way to go

Some of the baddies are more athletic than you, so wise action is required to beat them



In tight moments, Blake's knee can glow bright green, distracting the aliens long enough to chin them

Half A World Away

This week, *Wish You Were Here* brings you an incredibly cheap package tour through five alien moons. Transport is arranged via an unseen alien overlord, and accommodation is sparse but free. The locals have a unique attitude towards tourists, but can be won over with a bit of a slap. That bird from *Wheel Of Fortune* has this full report...



ICE MOON Certainly a chilly place, but hopefully your stay here won't be long! Be sure to investigate the local architecture, where many unique gifts can be found, and take in the wildlife, as the giant snowcats are known throughout the galaxy. However, if they're sleeping, do not wake them as they can deliver a painful scratch



GARDEN MOON A lovely tranquil place, with a serene religious sect who will be more than happy to demonstrate their martial arts skills for you. Take care not to get lost in their holy temple, or you might find their magic chest which is sacred. Handy for backpacking, but they won't be at all happy with you. Nice likkle pussy cats too



Moody lighting makes some of the fights truly cinematic

few feeble cat type things nibbling your feet, but when you have to face up to a squad of kung fu alien monks you'll start to appreciate Blake's speedy hands and feet. The baddies, of which there are 20 varieties, won't topple easily either. The programmers have conjured up a new fighting system called Behavioural Artificial Intelligence, which allows your opponents to learn your attack style and adjust their offences accordingly. When this works with a group of enemies it should, in theory, provide a tough and realistic fighting challenge.

It does, to a certain degree. The fight scenes, which are the bulk of the game, are frenetic and brutal. And, as promised, the enemy does seem to cotton on to your tactics after a while. It sometimes suffers from that old beat'em-up syndrome whereby you can hit buttons at random and win, but as long as you're not expecting a traditional fighting game, the five-man scraps are a pretty groovy idea.

The only problem with them is the over enthusiastic camera angles. They look fantastic during the run about and explore moments, tend to change during a fight often obscuring your view or even leaving you off screen all together. It's never long enough to spoil the game completely, but it is annoying.

In between the fights you've got to wander around the alien landscape finding health bonuses, keys and map beacons to open up new areas. These new areas, inevitably, contain more bloodthirsty beasts and lead to more punching. That's because, if you remember the story, Blake's been dumped into these environments for the



The attention to detail in the backdrops really does add to the atmosphere. Pity it's not interactive



Oops. Blake got a bit full of himself there, and eats a faceful of snow for his arrogance. Get up, you damn fool



One on one fighting is easy enough, but just wait until he get's his mates to join in



The two ape men were stumped by Blake's infamous 'vanishing 10p piece' trick



The camera pans around to keep everything in view. It doesn't always work, but it's usually OK



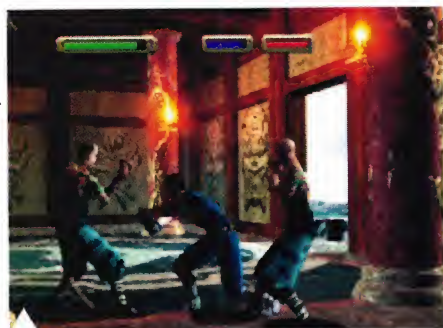
FOREST MOON One for the adventurous holiday maker. This part of the excursion will require you to get 'hands on' with the flora and fauna around you. Many visitors return with colourful tales of their encounters with the local scorpion-monkeys. Usually just before they die from the potent poisons coursing through their bloodstream



DESERT MOON Phew! What a scorcher! Dinosaurs still roam this land, among the deep ravines, but local law permits you to beat the crap out of them. Sunglasses are essential to survival, as are sturdy boots to clear the infamous chasms. If you find an Amulet then you can visit the popular 'Hidden Boss' attraction as the entry fee is not included in package



PROTEUS MOON Little is written about your final destination in guide books, mostly because nobody's ever come back alive. Strange alien corridors, with robot henchmen and mutant gorillas have been rumoured, but nothing's for certain. It's a lively nightspot but, as with all major cities, be sure to keep your Travellers Cheques safe



These alien monks are lethal fighters. Their spinning torpedo kick is a particular monster, battering you silly in seconds



Ouch! Given the tightness of Blake's pants, it's a miracle he can pull off moves like this without extreme personal injury



An alien boss, who's gufs are so powerful he can actually levitate on them

'Aah! Aah! OK, I'll give you my lunch money, just stop giving me chinese burns'



Nice to see that the respected tradition of Morris Dancing is still as popular as ever in other galaxies

So here's Blake, kicking and punching his way to meet his fist quota before the alien overlord lets him move on



That basket thing is the teleport out of the level. But you can only leave when you've fought enough

And it all goes horribly wrong, one guy still standing, our butch and rugged hero is on his knees. Sort it out, man



Perfect Weapon

entertainment of that creepy alien geezer. And he'll only allow Blake to leave a world if and when he's been amused enough.

So in other words, you've got to keep fighting until the boss is happy. And speaking of bosses, there's a big, mean mutha at the end of each world just to keep you busy. They're generally a lot bigger than you and able to crush you in a few blows so it's a good idea to stock up on health power ups before you get stuck in there.

So it's an exploration themed beat'em-up, with unfair ganging up tactics from a multitude of alien killing machines. It sounds, in a bizarre sort of way,

like Resident Evil meets Tekken. Or at least that's what Electronic Arts is hoping, as that's how it's been describing it. It's a brave claim and almost true.

Perfect Weapon isn't quite as good as Resident Evil at exploring or atmosphere, and it's not as crisp a beat'em-up as Tekken. It is, however, marginally more than the sum of its parts. While the controls aren't as smooth or intuitive as its

cannibalised halves, once you've mastered those it becomes a credible romp.

The levels are pretty huge, and while progress is linear you still get a sense of satisfaction when you reach the end. You can save the game at any point, so picking up where you left off is never a problem, and passwords allow you to jump to each level.

A feature worthy of extra special attention is the sound. Each level begins with Blake narrating his thoughts on the current situation. Fair enough, but he does it in such a ridiculously butch accent that it's difficult not to wet yourself with laughter every time you hear him. A real cinema trailer voice over and no mistake. The baddies don't speak, mores the pity, but the animals let out squeals realistic enough to prompt a phone call to Rolf Harris. The monkeys and cats in particular sound like they've been sampled from real creatures being thumped. Although, I doubt that's the case, for any lawyers reading.

Now, I've just read what the rest of the team have said in their comments and they reckon it's not much cop. I can see where they got that impression – this is the sort of game where you won't see the full appeal until you've played it for an hour or so at least. Up until that point, it does seem to be a bit of a let down. But once you get used to the blend of 3-D adventure, and four on one fight scenes, you start to appreciate the deeper aspects of the game. It's an awkward experience at first,



There's nothing more off putting than spooky monks hovering nearby during a scrap



Er, Blake. Turn around. There's a giant blue fella looking mighty riled behind your back. I think you should see what he wants



When defeated the bodies disintegrate into pure energy, which you can then collect for your own sordid purposes



Now that's just showing off. If he lands badly from that, then he'll have some extremely nasty splinters



At long last, Blake manages to knock down the big blue bloke. He's still not out for the count though



It's a pity, but although this looks like a ring out situation, you can't actually fall off the edges

and I think this goes some way to explain everyone else's lukewarm opinions. It's worth bearing in mind though, that if you want a pick up and play fighting game then Star Gladiator or Tobal is your best bet. Likewise, if 3-D exploration is your bag, then you can't go wrong with Tomb Raider. If you're broad minded however and don't mind a game that doesn't mollycoddle you, I think you should at least take a look at Perfect Weapon.

Despite the name, this is by no means a perfect game, but if you're willing to make a bit of an effort, you will get your money's worth. It isn't brilliant, but the two game styles blend better than you might think and is intriguing enough to warrant a look for those of you that are curious. This is a bold venture and that alone deserves some respect, even if it does over reach itself sometimes.



No time to contemplate your next move in a four man brawl. Just keep your wits about you and the fists flying

PRO SCORE

GAME Perfect Weapon
CONTACT 01753 549442

GENRE Adventure/Fighting
RELEASE DATE February

SOFTWARE HOUSE Electronic Arts
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 8

A strange beast, this one. Trying to be a 3-D adventure game, as well as its frequent beat'em-up interludes, there's a big risk that it could fall between the two stools and leave a mess on the floor. It avoids this terrible fate, but only just. It's not instantly playable, and can be confusing at times, but the more you play the better it gets. Technically it's very good but gameplay wise it's a definite try before you buy, as I can't see this being everyone's cup of tea. Even so, it's a grower and dedicated players won't be let down.

8
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

ALEX A bit like Resident Evil and Fade To Black, but not quite as good as either of 'em

ANDY Tries a little too hard to be a clever combination of many superior releases

JAY Top annoying monkey noises, but otherwise it's a fairly dull psuedo-beat 'em-up adventure

PETE Moves well, looks good, plays good, but it ain't no Resident Evil in my book

Cool Boarders

Pull off, like, rad and bitchin' stunts with no gnarly crashes, dude, just full on boardin' action. And stuff. All this and more incomprehensible rubbish, in the world's first snowboard simulator



Trying to avoid boarder/rock interfaces like this is essential if you're to beat the strict time limits on the harder courses



Here's another reason to keep clear of the rocks. They go all blocky when you get up close and look horrible

Skiing, I have to admit, has always been a mystery to me. The appeal of thundering down cliffs wearing planks on your feet doesn't quite fit my idea of fun. Ski jumping is even worse. Flying through the air, with the aforementioned planks wobbling beneath you and hitting the ground at many hundreds of miles per hour. Oh yes please, where can I sign up?

So snowboarding? Not high on my list of hobbies to try, to be honest. Having said that, it's easier to see the appeal of snowboarding. Skiing still has a slight 'Eddie the Eagle' feel about it. Snowboarding, on the other mitten, has all the posing and Pepsi Max ruggedness of surfing and skydiving rolled into one supreme danger sport. It's not terribly hard to see why Sony plumped for this rather than the much sought after 'Ski Sunday' license deal.

In keeping with this achingly trendy sport, the game begins not with a section where you can minutely adjust the aerodynamics of your board, but with a choice of outfits and in game music. You can even play as a male or female boarder, each with

slightly different stances and wardrobes. There are also various types of board to choose from, in a pleasing array of matching colours. Those essential technical choices out of the way, it's time to pick a course and 'hit the slopes', as proper snowboarders probably never say.

There are three main courses, all detailed in one of those eye catching boxes elsewhere on these pages and all of them are selectable from the start. There's also a bonus course available when you finish first on all the other courses, but with the benefit of first hand experience I'd say that's unlikely to occur for a long time. So, pick a course and away you go.

You start off perched atop slopes of varying scariness and when the magic 'Go!' appears you start to slide down it, gathering speed. Left and right makes you lean, thus steering the board in gentle curves and pressing up makes you crouch slightly giving a minor boost of speed. For tighter corners, holding the square button and steering make wider turns possible by actually turning the



As you can see, I've pulled off a Fakie to 720 Tail Grab. I just wish I knew how I did it, so I could explain it to you



This packed snow, it's very slippery and if you hit it at full speed you'll go full pelt and probably fly off the next corner

No Business Like Snow Business



NOVICE The most basic track of all. It's fairly sedate, very wide and has lots of easy to hit stunt points. Real snowboarders would scoff at you for struggling here. If you can't crack this one then you're one bogus nelly, man



ADVANCED Certainly no picnic, but do-able. Just. The track splits in two at one point, with an easyish route through a forest or a bowel loosening rush over a sheer precipice. And you have to leap over a road at the end



EXPERT Oh, knickers. This is where it gets incredibly hard. Trees all over the course, massive drops to certain death and steep, winding, narrow corridors of black ice are just some of the treats on offer. Oh happy day



SPECIAL The fabled secret course that only reveals itself when you manage to beat all the record times on the previous tracks. So naturally, I haven't got a clue what it looks like. Sorry. Here's a picture of a 'dude' instead



This checkpoint gives you extra time and, as shown by the blue 'Get Loose' banners, is a point earning stunt jump to boot

board. This can prevent you hitting walls, but it can also slow you down if you turn too far. So far, so good. Then you reach a jump point and stunts enter the equation.

Now, you're under no obligation to do any stunts at all. If you just want to break the speed records it's acceptable to simply fly over these jumps with nary a wobble. However, if you don't do any stunts the game becomes nothing more than a 'slipping down a mountain' simulator, which isn't very exciting.

You can do stunts any time you want, but you'll only be scored on them when you pull them off at designated stunt points on the course. No matter where or when you do them, stunts require you to hold down the X button as you approach the jump and then release it at the last minute. While the button is held down the boarder crouches and won't be able to steer, but when released they fly upwards ready for stunts. Once in the air, the square button spins you around and the shoulder buttons grab the board. Using combinations of these, you can spin and rotate like an airborne demon. Just make sure you face the right way when you land, eh?

Now here's a confession. After hours of feeble turns and tumbles and stunt scores barely scraping the hundreds, we discovered from the nice people at Sony that you can hold down the buttons required for your stunts while keeping the X depressed. Once the X is released, the stunt kinda happens automatically with suitably impressive 1260 degree tail grab somersaults. This improved our gameplay no end.

Purely from a gameplay point of view, this is one of the most immediate games I've seen. The very idea of it is tempting enough to get you on the joypad and the speed doesn't disappoint. The music sounds a bit like the BBC's idea of what's cool, all howling Van Halen geetars and Chili Peppers bass lines, but it suits the atmosphere in a passable manner.

You also have the wonderful addition of, and I quote from Sony's press release, 'A virtual DJ' who apparently provides 'ice cool commentary'. This seems to involve yelping the same five meaningless phrases over and over again, like a battery powered Normski and thus he'll irritate within two plays. Turn him off from the start and save yourself the pain.

The main problem with Cool Boarders is that there's nothing more to the game beyond racing down slopes and doing spinning stunts. No leagues, no tournaments and worst of all, no multiplayer mode.

The closest you get to two player fun is racing against the 'ghost' of the racer before you. This entertains for a while, but you soon miss the ►



That's a sheer drop to the right. Falling off costs precious seconds

Here I am, mid air, admiring the view. I should do some stunts but, frankly, I'm scared



55kph is relatively slow in this game, but fast enough to be a problem with this bend

Halfway through a stunt, and my boarder seems to have adopted the Elvis pose



One of the outfits on offer is this practical body warmer and mittens



Some courses require careful steering through tricky caves



The finish line looms at last, so what better time to go arse over tit, thus jeopardising my chances of getting a good result?



Cool Boarders

► unpredictable element of having another human player racing you neck and neck. You can't even race against computer boarders, to add insult to injury. It's a very lonely and singular experience, which is strange given the social aspects of the real sport.

These niggles coupled with only three tracks, plus a measly one bonus course, just make this feel like less than a full game. As a subsection of a winter sports version of Track and Field this would be a great laugh and we'd rave about it from the roof. As a stand alone game, the instant appeal soon wanes and you're left with a repetitive and frustratingly small experience. Which is a great shame as the snowboard idea holds real promise. Maybe Namco's Alpine Surfer will be better. A great idea poorly implemented.

Choose your gender and then pick a stunning winter wardrobe for the slopes



The boarder leans, as seen here, to manoeuvre about the course. This won't be enough turn to make it through the boulder chicane up ahead though. Time to use the square button



The ominous and quite frightening Expert course lies ahead with an apt and gloomy mountain backdrop



Through this bridge lies the end of the Novice track. If you can't get that far then stay off the slopes, wussy



That'll be a tight fit twist fence and ski lift. Should've gone round the other side really



Just when you think things are getting easier, someone plants a bloody forest on the track



And about time too. You wouldn't believe the hassles I've had getting here

PRO SCORE

GAME Cool Boarders
CONTACT 0171 447 1600

GENRE Sports Sim
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Sony
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 7
SOUND 6
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 5

This could've been fantastic. It might be the first snowboarding game, but the sport deserves better than this. All it needed was two things: More courses and a two player mode. Without those, Cool Boarders is little more than a passing curiosity. You might want to rent it from the video shop just to experience the undeniable thrill of zooming expertly through ravines and over cliffs, but as for paying full whack for this? I don't think so, unless you're a wannabe snowboarder. A missed opportunity.

7
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

STEVE I like it because it's a bit different, but it's still basically a sub standard racing game on a plank
ANDY If there were more circuits and a two player game, this would be unbeatable. Sequel please
JAY No championship mode or two player option earns this a frosty reception from the long term fun seekers
ALEX Life on 'slopes' getting 'rad' all by yourself can get quite lonely. Frankly, it 'board' me stoopid. Arf, arf

Advanced
Dungeons & Dragons

IRON & BLOOD

warriors of
Ravenloft

THE DARK SIDE OF 3-D FIGHTING!



Acclaim

PLAYSTATION™

SEGA SATURN™

DOS CD-ROM™



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Tobal No. 1

Bizarre creatures from throughout the galaxy congregate on the planet Tobal, have a nice meal, get some beers in, then go clubbing. Oh, sorry. No they don't. They fight. In 3-D, for a change



The hilariously named Nork (in Australia, they call women's breasts norks) grabs Gren



Epon is feeling a bit ponny (office slang for paranoid). Sorry, couldn't resist it

Sick of these yet? Fighting games seem to smother the PlayStation, like fat bees around a gorgeous bloom. Then someone saw fit to throw 3-D into the equation and the swarm of beat 'em-ups became a flood. And it's still going on. The trouble is that most of them are actually pretty good when judged on their own merits – Tobal is the perfect example of this.

There are eight normal characters to choose from and the obligatory gaggle of hidden bosses. They've got special moves, they've got combos. You can throw people over the edge for a ring out victory. Everything every other beat 'em-up has, in other words. There are a few cunning features that lift this above the crowd, but first, let's see how Tobal shapes up as a straight forward thumporama.

As I said, it has all the features you'd expect. There are no fatalities or finishing moves, so beat 'em-up nerds will be a bit upset about that, but there are a veritable plethora of combinations which can be used to inflict massive damage on an opponent. And the damage is massive. A quick three hit combo can eat up half your energy and the default time limit is brief, so matches are transformed into quick, nasty clashes rather than prolonged bouts of block and counter block – which is good news for those who like a bit of action, like myself.

Things can be made even nastier by adjusting the survival level. This means that instead of starting each round with full energy, you only gain a certain percentage of it back. If you're on a losing streak, you'll start each round with less and less energy. If you're winning, your opponent gets weaker and weaker. It makes the versus matches a lot more heated, that's for certain.

For your aural pleasure, the music is a weird blend of Japanese pop and western club music that never quite attracts your attention. The sound





A scene from the intro sequence when all the characters are introduced

effects are worth turning up though. Bone crunching snaps accompany each contact, along with a cacophony of thuds, cracks and groans. There's nothing worse than flimsy squeaking noises in a fighting game, you want a bit of 'Grrrrr' during a punch up, don't you? It's one of those things that really helps a beat 'em-up grab you and Tobal's FX are more than adequate.

For the eyes, the graphics, as you can see, are a bit bizarre. While every other game is trying to cram in as much detail as possible, with Star Gladiator holding the crown of 'Most Useless Yet Flashy Features In A Game', Tobal goes the other way and tones down the backgrounds and polygons. No texture mapped photo realistic fighters here or interactive backgrounds. Just smooth, crisp motion and functional backgrounds. It's a sort of quiet zen monk of a game, full of inner confidence in it's own skills, compared to the bluster of the rest of the genre. And it pays off.

You see, this is simply a fantastic pick up and play game. The movement of the fighters is a dream to watch and the special moves are down to earth but impressively acrobatic. Fireball dragon punches? Nope. Somersault kick to chin? By golly, yes. The super fast moves leave sweeps of light after them, in true manga style and the whole fighting caboodle looks bloody great. Honest.

The moves are easy to figure out, thanks to an intuitive set up, but difficult to use at the right time. And that for me is the whole point of a beat 'em-up. Real skill lies in knowing when to use a move, not knowing which long winded sequence of buttons will make it happen. And that's what Tobal relies on, bless it's little cotton socks.

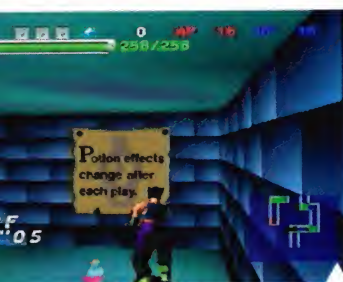
As a beat 'em-up, it's a bit of a winner. Great to look at, easy to get to grips with, but with enough depth to keep you plugging away. So what of these exciting extras? If you read the preview last month ▶



I'm sure Dan had some sexual reference planned for this shot, so will 'Ooooh, matron' do?



Screenshot of the month. Gren gets hurled outta the screen by Oliems



The completely stark raving bonkers maze section that uncovers hidden fighters

Two Tobal protagonists looking for all the world like a pair of Playpeople (toys from the seventies)



Can We Have Our Tobal Back Please?



Chuji Wu: A solid all rounder, born on Earth to Japanese parents. At the tender age of 17, he's already a master of martial arts. He's Tobal's token 'Ken' character



Epon: She don't say much, but her speed and agility make her a fierce opponent. But then they always say that about female characters in beat 'em-ups to make up for the fact that they're crap



Oliems: He looks like a right brute, but this native of the planet Kientak is a warm hearted, philosophical type. He's got two kids and his favourite food is fried worms



Hom: The most irritating fighter in the game. Started out as a labour droid, but learned martial arts from Fei Pusu. Makes stupid noises and stamps on your head a lot



Fei Pusu: The essential 'wizened old Eastern bloke'. His age is unknown, as is his place of birth, but he won the 66th Tobal Tournament and tutored Hom, the robot



Illi-Goga: Wants to win the Tournament so he can propose to his girlfriend. He even reads Shakespeare in his spare time. His punches, however, are pretty un-flowery



Marie Ivonskava: A single mother from Earth, Russia to be precise. This tank in tights used to be a world champion pro wrestler. Slow, but very powerful, especially during grapples



Gren Kuts: Born to a wealthy British family (hence the typical English name) this young upstart is Marie's arch rival. He's fast with his feet and a bit of a combo king to boot

Gren lets off such a gross fart that Mufu has to put his gasmask on



Okay, so his name's really Snork, but Nork's miles funnier. Especially if you happen to be Australian

Tobal No. 1

► you'll already know what they are. First is the Quest mode. Here you pick one of the fighters and plunge into a vast labyrinth of dungeons, hunting for a magic mineral called Molmoran.

In addition to fighting numerous monsters with your tried and tested fighting moves, you can now also run, jump, dodge, side step and pick up and use objects. It's a mini beat 'em-up adventure, like a cute Perfect Weapon or Tekken and Tomb Raider's bastard offspring. And it works really well.

The controls aren't as easy as they could be, but the idea is solid and it's extremely playable. Not playable enough for it to stand alone, but as an added bonus it's like getting twice as much as you asked for from a cash machine. The point to all this dungeon nonsense is to get to the bosses. Finish a dungeon and you can use one of the bosses in the tournament battles. The monsters in the Quest are different to the ones in the main game. Most are feeble, but there are some hulking surprises down there as well.

The other innovation comes in the normal fight mode. As well as fist/face contact, you can grab your opponent by the scruff of the neck and grapple with them. While in a grapple you can throw them, knee them in the nuts or push and pull them over the edge. But, they can try to reverse the grapple and throw you as well. The grapple moves, especially the throws, are the best way to wear down energy in an impressive way so you've got to use them. It's a risk, but one that's well worth taking. And it is, of course, another feature that makes Tobal a special child in a school full of dullards.

In fact, let's stretch the school metaphor a bit further, just to round the review off. The other beat 'em-up children may have the smartest trainers, the coolest school bags and be the first to touch a girl's parts, but Tobal is the quiet, shy child who everyone else ignores in class.

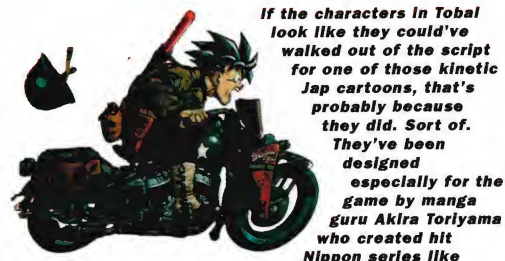
But when you take the time to look closely at it's homework, you realise that little unassuming Tobal is one of the most gifted kids in the class. Why not invite it round for tea? I know I will.



Losing never gets any easier. Especially to a robot of dubious sexuality



Anime Maniac



If the characters in Tobal look like they could've walked out of the script for one of those kinetic Jap cartoons, that's probably because they did. Sort of. They've been designed especially for the game by manga guru Akira Toriyama who created hit Nippon series like

Dragon Ball Z and Chrono Trigger.

Both these series have been converted to consoles. Dragon Ball came out on the Sega Saturn (remember that?) as well as a slew of Dragon Ball games on the 16bit consoles. A few even came out on the PSX in Japan. Chrono Trigger was an RPG on the SNES, I think, although that was years ago. So it looks like Tobal can stand up and proclaim it's the only original anime beat 'em-up on any console that's not based on an existing manga series designed by top anime fella Akira Toriyama. And that's something to be proud of, surely?

Let's face it, if you were threatened by a mad mouse, you'd probably want to kick his head in, wouldn't you?



Gren beats Olleims because he's got more energy left after the allotted 30 seconds



PRO SCORE

GAME Tobal No. 1
CONTACT 0171 447 1600

GENRE Beat 'Em-Up
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Sony
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 9
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 8

While 3-D beat'em-ups are fast becoming the PlayStation equivalent of Last Of The Summer Wine, even my cynical heart was quickened by Tobal. It's a rare treat, accessible and, most importantly, fun. The Quest mode adds a whole new dimension for single players and is much more than just a gimmick crow barred in for effect. Great characters, near perfect gameplay and enough moves to please the die hards, it's hard to fault. Not quite as good as Star Gladiator or Tekken, but as an overall package this is fantastic value.

8 1/2
OVERALL OUTTA 10

ALEX I'd have given it nine, especially after seeing Reloaded get eight and a half

ANDY Not quite as good as Star Gladiator, but better than Tekken 2. I can't Stand Tekken 2

JAY I've steered clear of this because Dan and Alex are so good at it. Looks pretty nifty, though

STEVE I'm not a beat'em-up fan, but the quest mode caught my eye somewhat

Hold on to your shorts little man..... here's your chance to play with the Big boys!

NBA JAM EXTREME



Hold on to your shorts little man - this is your chance to play with the big boys! NBA Jam Extreme takes Basket Ball to new heights, featuring ballistic graphics and ultra-addictive gameplay. Full 3D rotoscoping makes our 170 NBA superstars look prettier than the originals and now there's even more control from a range of killer 'Extreme' moves. You also get to eat clouds more than ever with an even wilder selection of anti-gravity, out-to-lunch monster dunks! Boomshakalaka! Don't look down!

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PlayStation

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Kart Duel

Ayrton Senna was undoubtedly never one to settle for second best in anything, so why has his name been associated with this second rate racer?



If he's not too careful his legs will be shattered by a speeding opponent. Painful



A very serious Senna who looks as if he's wondering what the hell he's doing here



The quickest kart of the lot is tricky to control around any of the large bends simply because it is so quick



Another very serious looking Senna who now looks resigned to the fact that he's stuck in this game whether he likes it or not



The earlier circuits can be memorised quickly so progression through the courses is a rapid process indeed

As many people will know karting is a bit of a laugh and can get the adrenalin flowing at quite a pace but it's difficult to remember anybody successfully converting this poor man's Grand Prix racing on any format. Certainly it has been tried many times before but it's always lacked in one major department – the gameplay.

So, is Sunsoft's tribute to the great Brazilian champion worthy of his name? Well, the answer has to be no. First and foremost his name will always be remembered as a Grand Prix driver. How many kart drivers can you name off the top of your head? Sure, a lot progress through many different channels in less powerful cars to the big time but the point remains, who really knows or cares about kart racing apart from the drivers and teams themselves?

Secondly, the question has to be asked: If Ayrton Senna was alive today would he have given permission for his name to be used in this licence? The answer would surely once again have been no.

Although Senna was a kart fan and started his racing driving dream as a child, Sunsoft's karting game lacks the quality which the driver would have

insisted upon. Initial impressions aside however, this has to be one of the best kart game seen on any format. Not that it's got much quality to contest it.

When beginning a game you will have to choose a kart and a class in which to drive. It's best to start on the beginners' level to get used to the kart and the way it handles. Each of the four karts differs in terms of acceleration, speed, handling and grip so you must choose wisely for the circuit you're racing on.

Weather too can change from course to course and the tyres must be chosen accordingly. This shouldn't pose too much of a problem to the brain damaged amoeba as it will either be raining or sunny. It's no problem at all as the weather isn't prone to sudden changes from one lap to the next.

Unfortunately nobody thought to include a



The circuits rotate on this screen to give you some idea of what's in store. The only thing you need to know about this one is it's a cinch

Dull and dreary weather with a spot of rain can only mean it's time to prepare for a wet race



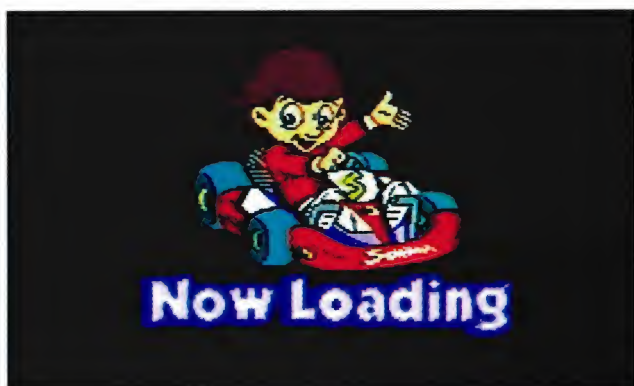
The run into the qualifying lap gives you the chance to pick up some speed for the first straight

A respectable qualifying time will stand you in good stead for the race ahead. If you're quick here you could be in first in no time

1	No. 10	0' 27" 85	2	No. 9	0' 27" 95
3	No. 8	0' 28" 60	4	No. 3	0' 28" 65
5	No. 1	0' 28" 76	6	No. 12	0' 28" 96
7	No. 6	0' 30" 55	8	No. 4	0' 30" 88
9	No. 7	0' 31" 55	10	No. 5	0' 32" 23
11	No. 11	0' 36" 21	12	No. 2	0' 36" 96



The buffeting you receive from the other drivers during a race can become extremely annoying



A replay of the race follows the completion of a course and shows exactly where you went wrong



championship mode and each circuit must be won to progress to the next. Second best just won't do in the world in karting.

On the plus side to the lack of options is the gameplay. It does take some time to get used to the handling but once it's mastered you will know that a brake is very important as well as some quick steering. Another plus factor is that with the four different karts it means the races all have to be tackled in different ways.

As many good points as there are for Kart Duel, there are a couple of bad points which prevent this being a must buy.

The major one is the lack of two player split screen option (a point which has been made about many racing games before). One player racing games have always lacked the punch of a split screen contest against a friend. So where's this duel mentioned in the title? It's another 40 odd quid and a link up away, that's where.

If you're a bit of a Senna fan you can also browse through his entire Formula One career placings from 1984 to his untimely demise at Imola in 1994. All of this as well as numerous pictures of

the man himself through his life are contained in the Senna Memorial which although has its heart in the right place just comes across as more than a tad tacky.

In total there are only nine circuits to complete in different skill levels and once this is done it's difficult to see anybody returning for more.

During the races you are offered the opportunity of changing from the in kart view to a couple of slightly differing outer views which allow you to see more of the circuit ahead.

Add to these the usual racing options of altering the number of laps and having a time trial against the clock, you've got nothing more than a slight variation on any racing game from Mario Kart to the atrocity which was the recent Penny Racers.

The karts do however move much quicker than you'd expect and at times it does become slightly enjoyable to play. But these moments are few and far between.

At the end of the day once you've qualified and had a race, won the race and done the next circuit there's nothing much else to do apart from view the intro and the memorial. And this just isn't enough.

PRO SCORE

GAME Kart Duel
CONTACT 0171 826 8816

GENRE Racing
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Sunsoft
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 7
SOUND 6
GAMEPLAY 7
LASTABILITY 5

I was never an Ayrton Senna fan, probably because he was a bit of a smart arse and just couldn't be beaten. Even today his record for pole positions still stands. Although for how much longer is anyone's guess. Had he been alive today I'm sure he'd be as disappointed in Kart Duel as I am. The reason is that although it looks fairly average and plays well (a big plus factor for any game) it doesn't have the adrenalin rush of real kart racing. Maybe if there was a split screen option it would add a whole new dimension to this racing game.

6
OVERALL OUTTA 10

STEVE An outdated licence for an outdated game I'm afraid. There's much better stuff than this around

DAN The karting angle is interesting, but the game is dull and the Senna licence is tenuous to say the least

ALEX Six out of ten? That's a bit kind, really. Some of the most awful clipping I've seen on a race game

JAY It looks dirt to me. So much so that I haven't given it much of a go. Nothing to impress me here

PRO COMPETITION

Command & Conquer



...AND WIN!

To follow our fabulous C&C players' guide which came free with last issue, we've got together with the boys and girls at Virgin Interactive to present you with this wild and crazy giveaway.

The first prize is really special. We're giving the first person pulled from our shrapnel-damaged helmet a day out (with four pals) driving tanks! Yes, if you win, you and your best mates will be whisked off to the sunny Wiltshire countryside to spend the day pissing about in combat gear, getting transported around in an Amphibious Humber Pig Personal Carrier and then moving on to the big stuff as the lot of you climb aboard the full-sized and fully operational Chieftain Battle Tank and spend the rest of the day tearing around muddy fields and the like.

For the runners-up there are 20 copies of the best army strategy game around (that's Command & Conquer, by the way).

So, are you up for it? Fancy driving a massive tank

around for the day and being the envy of all your pals back home? If so, there's only one thing you need to do and that's enter this compo! Now! To stand a chance of winning, simply send us a postcard to the usual Freepost address marked "Conkers!", and on the reverse of aforementioned postcard, scribble down the name of the leader of the NOD terrorist group in Virgin Interactive's stunning military sim, Command & Conquer. That's easy enough, innit? Good luck!



Probably your one and only chance this lifetime to drive a fully-sized tank with a load of your mates sat in the back! Become the envy of everyone who knows you by winning this fabulous competition. Of course, you've got to enter first...



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not for resale **PC HOME**

ReLoaded

Not content with plastering blood and entrails all over the PlayStation last year, in a comedy manner of course, Gremlin has beefed everything up and slammed a fresh clip into the gun of fun



Ging Gang Goolies

Ging gang goolie goolie goolie goolie watcha ging gang goo ging gang goo. Ging gang goolie goolie goolie goolie watcha ging gang goo ging gang goo. Hayla! Hayla shayla...



If you remember the original Loaded, you'll know that the task was to escape from a futuristic prison, playing as one of a motley selection of murderous killers. You had been framed by a warder, called FUB (or fat ugly bastard to his friends) and it was his head you wanted to smash. You achieved your aim and FUB's brain pod went flying into space.

Now for the bad news. FUB's brain pod landed on a planet full of hippies and artists, where he came to the attention of one Manuel Auto, a tanned Adonis with artistic leanings. Mistaking the brain pod for a comet, Manuel took it home as an object d'art.

Needless to say, FUB saw his chance and promptly transferred his own twisted psyche into Manuel's body. So he's FUB no more. He's now CHEB, or Charming Handsome Erudite Bastard. He remains, unfortunately, a psychopath of the highest order and has big plans for galactic domination. Who better to stop his plans than the gang of thugs who pulverised him in the first place? Oh yes, the boys and girls are back in town.

As before, it's a top down blood feast where bullets and extreme violence mean more than words and strategy. The viewpoint has changed marginally to give you a clearer view of the action, and there are a few new characters, but it's fair to say that this isn't a game that will have you struggling with the controls. Run, shoot and on occasion, use a smart bomb. That's about it really.

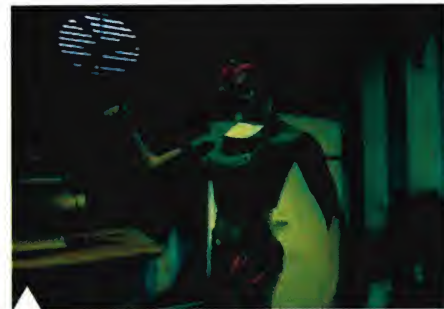
However, things aren't quite as simple as they were in the original Loaded. Whereas that merely required you to leg it through mazes, killing along the way to the exit, you now have objectives for each level. For instance, the first level asks you to



MAMMA:
huge, hulking and desperately stupid. Missing his mother to the point of psychosis, this murderous mummy's boy has a pretty feeble gun, but his special Seismic Tantrum smart bomb is a sight to behold. The ground ripples like a stormy sea, turning everyone into jellied lumps of goo. Fantastic



SISTER MAGPIE
A brand new character, replacing the less than popular Fwank. This cyber-nun had her circuits fried in a sneak attack and now roams space with a massive cannon welded to her arm. Her special, Animal Magnetism, involves blue balls of energy frying everyone



THE CONSUMER
Another new girl, with a taste for human flesh. Suspiciously Tank Girl-esque, she has huge rocket launchers on her shoulders attached to her brain. Tapping the special button unleashes a sort of green whirlwind, called Oh-Beese for some reason



Thankfully, once you clear the first two levels the game really opens up and the levels change dramatically



The theme of destruction may not vary, but the way you carry it out certainly does



Bang bang the mighty fall – woo ha ha aah! Bang bang when love has called – woo haahh! Bang baaaang...

So What's All This 'Fisto' Business About Then?

On the Foundry Town level, you'll see the word 'Fisto' sprayed on many walls and doors. No, it's not a reference to Gremlin's private lives, it's a cry for solidarity among common man. Or something. You see, Fisto is (or was) a graffiti artist from Gremlin's home turf of Sheffield. He was always being banged up, for something ridiculous like 100 years, for daring to cover dull, grey industrial buildings with colourful murals. Needless to say, his family and friends are campaigning against his draconian sentencing and it seems ReLoaded's programmers agree with them. Who said that games can't be political?



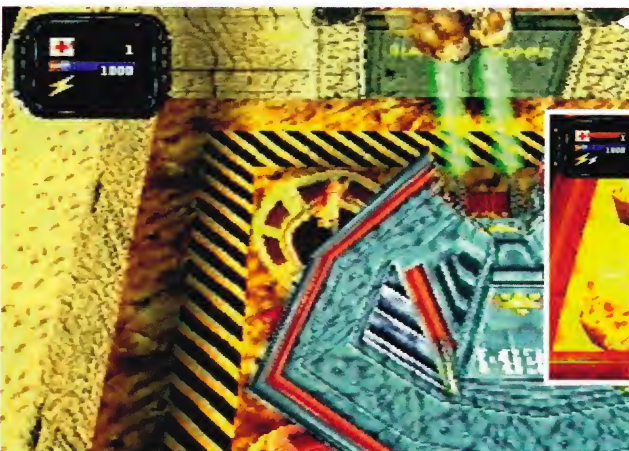
cross a bridge to the east of where you start. No problem, as it's located about one screen down from where you begin. But! There's a grumpy hippy blocking the way. He demands three insect grubs to fix the bridge. Shoot him and the toll rises to six grubs. So off you go through the rest of the map, trying to find bloody chrysalises for this long haired freak.

Similar tasks litter the levels, some of them obvious, others require a bit of thought. Sometimes a bit too much thought, as the way ahead isn't always immediately obvious. It means progress is rewarding, but spending hours wandering around the same area not knowing what you're looking for isn't much fun.

Thankfully, once you clear the first two levels, which are a bit dull to be honest, the game really opens up and the levels start to change dramatically. One of the levels even takes place in an ice fortress where excessive noise causes icicles to plunge down from the ceiling. Naturally, given your big guns, this isn't good news. In fact, each level has a cool idea like that somewhere.

The theme of destruction may not vary, but the way you carry it out certainly does. It's refreshing to find a game where your choice of character does seem to have an effect on the gameplay. The difference isn't massive, but the weapons for each character are varied enough to justify having a favourite based on more than just appearance. Personally, I prefer Butch's lethal double Uzi blast over the others and that's why he appears in most of these screenshots.

Like most games, two players means twice the fun. So it's a good thing it features a two player option. For a start, it's much more destructive ►



Don't press this button again. See those two green laser beams? They're your mucus trails, they are



An explosion. Yesterday. If you've read this caption, write to us saying what it should have been – we'll give the best answer a free game



CAP'N HANDS

The skeletal pirate/cowboy combination is back and even more grumpy than before. Losing most of his flesh in a 'falling out of a spaceship' mishap, his six shooters are as fast as ever and his special unleashes a dark red mist across the landscape. Yikes



BOUNCA

If yer name's not down, he'll blow your chin off. This metal jawed doorman has a new weapon to play with, the Tri-Me triple shooter, capable of dealing with hordes of bad guys in one go. His special is the Twist and Shout, sending spiralling grenades around the area



BUTCH

Now suffering from a frankly worrying Pamela Anderson transvestite obsession, this hairy groined thug uses land mines as pseudo breasts. His double Uzi firepower makes a meal of anyone stupid enough to get in the way and his special is nasty enough to please the crowds

ReLoaded

► with more explosions and blood plastering the screen, but there's an added treat to the two player game. You can adjust the aggression of your characters with regards to player damage. On the lowest level, you can't hurt each other. The next level up means shots from the other player chip away at your health slowly. The hardest level is an all out killfest, with death a constant occurrence. Not a way to complete the game, but it sure relieves office tension.

Probably the best way to round this off is to compare and contrast the original with it's chubby-legged sibling. The first thing you notice about ReLoaded is the loss of Pop Will Eat Itself from the soundtrack. In their place is a forgettable selection of techno tracks, so the visceral stomp of the Poppies is sorely missed.

That aside, the presentation for the sequel is a massive improvement. Each character now has a rendered intro movie and most of the old characters have received a make over and fresh batch of weapons. In terms of gameplay, ReLoaded isn't quite as frantic as the first game. This is either an improvement or a hideous shame, depending on how you found the original.

The sequel is a lot easier, but not as violent, and I can't help feeling that's a loss. Don't get me wrong, it makes it a better game in the long run, but I miss that brutal splatter of Loaded. The sequel is more involved and has more to do, but you can't beat the feeling of mowing down 30 baddies, guns blazing.

If you don't have the first and want a blood and guts blaster, this comes highly recommended. If you're a fan of the original there are enough improvements here to justify slinging another £45 in Gremlin's direction. Just a bloody good laugh, basically.



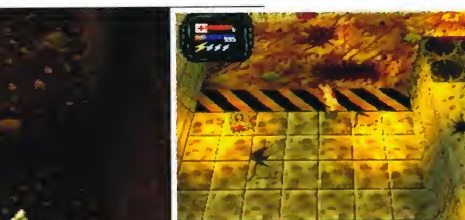
Triangular bouncing flame alert! Go near this blast of fierce fire and you'll get scorched



The characters are never quite as impressive in the game as they are on the adverts



Is that a massive rock formation or have you got a fossilised giant dinosaur tortoise on your head?



When a game's this good, you don't need the descriptive powers of Shakespeare



There may be a puzzle element, but what the hell? It's still about dishing out plutonium death



Living on the edge - and dying on the edge if you don't get outta there pronto style



Don't try this at home. You'll either a) Kill someone, b) Burn yourself severely or c) Trip over and damage the carpet

PRO SCORE

GAME ReLoaded
CONTACT Gremlin

GENRE Shoot'Em-Up
RELEASE DATE Out now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Gremlin
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 9

Not a million miles from the original, but the gameplay has been tweaked as well as the graphics and the new additions improve it. Fans of Loaded may be let down by the decrease in random violence and the introduction of puzzle elements, but these boost the game's longevity. The levels are more varied than before and the whole game looks fantastic after a fresh lick of paint. There'll always be a corner in the market for 'bullets and blood' games and this rules the roost for now. How long it'll stay there is another matter.

8½
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

ALEX I've written so many captions for this I feel like I've reviewed it. Eight and a half

ANDY Reminds me of that night I had out in Macc when I shot loads of innocent bystanders

JAY I know someone with a gun and he deals drugs. He's not my friend

STEVE ReLoaded? Pah. Try living the whole of your formative years in Salford

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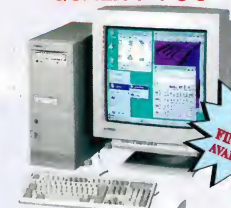
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NBA In The Zone 2

Konami once again takes the basketball competition into overtime with a three pointer at the buzzer, dashing Sony and Acclaim's hopes for outright victory



As you scroll through the various team badges, their location comes up on the map on the right so you learn a bit of geography

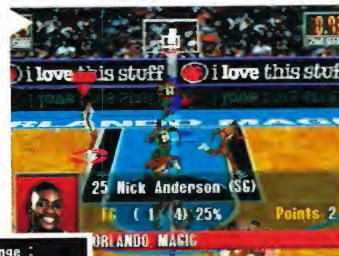
The CPU defences are usually pretty organised - it takes a bit of trickery to dribble through



This is a shot taken from the 'quarter' camera angle. Check the reflections on the gym floor



When a player scores points, his face appears with his updated game statistics



Member Change :
SEATTLE SONICS
PG 20 GARY PAYTON
SG 32 HERVEY HARRIS
SF 11 DETLEF SCHREMPF
PF 3 CRAIG EHLO
C 14 SAM PERKINS
40 GRANT WEMP
10 MATE MCILLAN
12 ERIC SNOW
21 GREG GRANAM
22 JIM MCILLVAINE
25 DAVID WINGATE
55 STEVE SCHEFFLER

Basketball's a squad game and it's vital to make personnel changes at the right moments

Necessity is the mother of invention. Necessity, therefore dictates that I have to write this review. The thing is, I'm not a major fan of basketball so I know I shouldn't really be reviewing this. Unfortunately we're right on deadline and everyone else is taking so long doing their various bits and pieces I've roped myself in to do this. Before you turn the page, I must add that although I'm not a b-ball enthusiast, I am a massive fan of two player competitive games and therein lies NBA In The Zone 2 (NITZ 2)'s greatest appeal.

Real-life basketball is a high point-scoring squad game played at a staccato pace. NITZ 2 adheres rigidly to the rules and conventions of the sport and as a result, reflects the stop-start nature accurately.

At times the action is pretty laid back, although the ball must be moved on eventually, or you'll incur a time penalty and lose the all-important possession. Moments such as this are immediately followed by a polygon close-up of the offending player. Often, the close-up graphic representation of the players is uncannily accurate - as the accompanying scanned photographs of the said lanky sportsmen bear out.

Attention to detail is spot on as far as I can see from my limited knowledge of basketball. Although from researching the original NITZ, its sequel doesn't seem to be all that different. It certainly isn't wildly enhanced, but the original was a strong enough title to firstly warrant a sequel and secondly, for the sequel to retain the base elements of last year's effort.

Like the first version, NITZ 2 rests snugly in between the frantic arcade action of the NBA Jams of this world and the full-on heavy simulation of Total NBA. Before you can even start thinking about the gameplay however, NITZ 2 offers an unparalleled

level of statistical depth and physical realism.

All the players from all of the NBA teams have been modelled on their real life counterparts. As well as having their own facial texture maps to give them distinguishable features (amazing enough in itself) they also have the same scaled height, build, shoe size and even wear the same clothes. For example, if a player wears a knee support in real life it's in there, as are accessories such as glasses and dyed hair, a la Dennis Rodman (the one who refused to do rude things with Madonna).

Admittedly, this will excite true NBA die hards more than your casual 'Sunday afternoon' player, but even I was forced to give more than an appreciative nod in the programmer's direction for their efforts. Judging by the realistic movement of the in-game players, it's obvious that the increasingly popular motion capture technique has been used again. This and the player's individual characteristics combine to make one of the most realistic sports games available on the PlayStation.

The best thing about playing this game is that you immediately get to grips with the fundamentals of the controls. In no time you'll be spinning past helpless defenders before 'monster jamming' the ball into the bucket for two! Initially however, this can lead you to the wrong conclusion - that it's all going to be too easy as you don't have to work all that hard to pull off spectacular moves.

Up the difficulty level a stage or two however, and you'll soon realise you're going to have to work a lot harder to achieve success. Defending is quite tricky to get the hang of and scoring all the points in the world is of no use if you concede on every single turnover of possession, so you need to put some real time in to perfect those blocking and stealing manoeuvres.

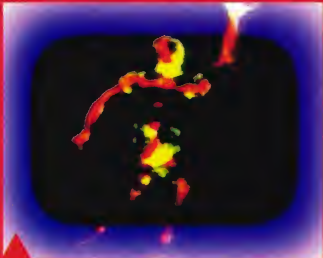


Ehlo's been found guilty of a personal foul. It's his first of the match and he's not happy about it

The first quarter of my first match and there's little for the fans to cheer about. Only nine points scored!



NBA Intro The Zone 4



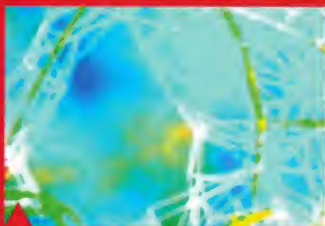
Some heat sensitive-style shot of a bloke playing one-on-nought basketball (by himself)



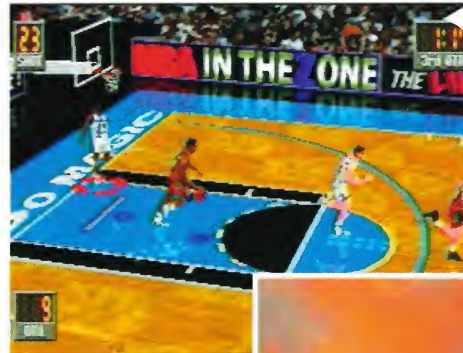
A wire-frame bloke spins around in a pretentious linked frame. Exciting stuff, this is



In case you forgot, the game's by Konami. That's Konami. Still haven't sent us a boxed copy of T & F yet



The bit on the left's the arm, the bit on the right's his waist, torso and top of thigh. Ah, I can see it now...



The 'live' camera view is my personal favourite. It's as if you're watching the game from the crowd



If something particularly spectacular happens, an extreme close-up immediately follows



Part of the arty Intro sequence where wire-frame basketball players come to life

You can choose to play an exhibition game against the CPU or a friend or take part in the playoffs and finals for a more competitive game. A welcome addition is the full season option for the more dedicated player – one of the few criticisms of the first NITZ was that this was missing. The options and numerous difficulty settings you can select add further to the game's long term challenge.

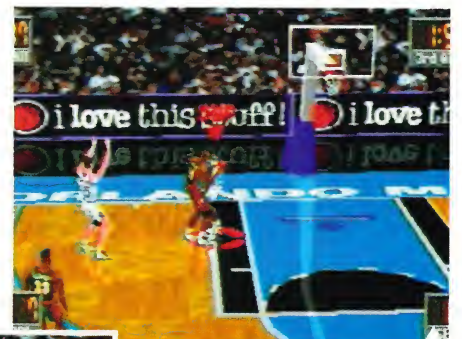
NITZ 2 is one of the best basketball games around. Surprisingly good in single player and unbelievably tense at times in two player. I've rarely come across a sports game that's as complete as this in terms of playability and longevity.

The basketball market seems to be a little overcrowded at the moment with four or five top quality titles all battling it out, but I have no hesitation in recommending NITZ 2. In its very specific genre – i.e. basketball games – it's difficult to see how it can be improved upon now the full season option has been added.

NITZ 2 is not as frantic as the NBA Jam series, nor is it as pretty as Total NBA, but combines the styles of both, morphing them into a game as easy to play as it is to watch – as absorbing as it is exciting. Basketball fans have a real dilemma on their hands, because this is another great representation of the sport.

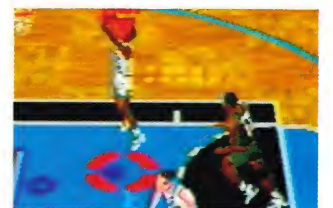


An action-packed moment from the first quarter of Orlando Magic vs the Seattle Sonics



The 'normal' camera view follows the ball up and down the length of the court

Captain Sam Perkins leads by example, scoring his first two-pointer of the match



PRO SCORE

GAME NBA In The Zone 2
CONTACT 01895 853 000

GENRE Sports Sim
RELEASE DATE Out now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Konami
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 8
SOUND 8
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 8

NBA In The Zone 2 continues to prove that minority sports in Britain can work well in the Brit PlayStation market. The teams and players featured are the high-profile, overpaid Yank ones, but I still find it amazing that a sport that only gets half an hour a week's screen time over here can be re-created on the PlayStation and prove so popular. NITZ 2'll give you hours of play in either one or two player mode, something which many sports games fail to offer – the single player option often being too easy or lacking in any great depth.

8 1/2
OVERALL OUTTA 10

ANDY Which one's this? So long as it stops me from working I'm up for a game, when I eventually arrive
DAN I said that if I ever saw another basketball game, I'd vomit eggs. And I just have. In a bucket
JAY A nice alternative to the likes of Total NBA and NBA 97, but by no means a ground-breaker. Or is it?
STEVE A worthy sequel to a superb original. Now I can play a whole season on my own

Smash Court Tennis

Let's face it, all this motion capture business hasn't worked for PlayStation tennis games yet has it? If you're yearning for the days of Super Tennis on the SNES, Namco has just the game for you



Get too close to the ball and you may get a nasty crack on the head. Infuriates some, amuses others



Club Mode is Smash Court Tennis' most novel feature – it allows you to build your own arena!



Also a game for 'the ladies', Smash Court has the option to play as either a male or female

The whole thing has a distinctly Manga feel to it, something which would normally put me right off

Addictive. That's what games used to be to me. Well, some of them at least. But more and more these days even the so called best games have failed to grab me in that way. I assumed it was just because I was becoming (even more) cynical, that I'd seen it all before and basically that there was nothing left I hadn't played in some form or another and therefore I found a lot of today's games, well, quite frankly boring.

But I was wrong. It wasn't me, or even my experiences with vast numbers of video games in general. Smash Court Tennis from Namco has proved to me that a great game is still, and always will be, a great game.

It may not look all that '32Bit'. It hasn't got fancy motion captured (yet still amazingly unrealistic) players, it hasn't even got a rendered intro sequence but who cares? Strip away the outer layers of 95 per cent of today's games and all you're left with is little more than an unoriginal, uninteresting and, in some cases, unplayable rehash of one or more games the programmer quite liked in the past.

Smash Court Tennis is different because it doesn't really have any outer layers to speak of and if it did, you'd be too busy playing the bloody fantastic game to worry about stripping them away. You may be surprised to read that if you unwisely invest in another PlayStation publication (which shall remain nameless) who were, shall we say, less than

enamoured with this. To say we were flabbergasted by their mark is something of an understatement. Obviously review scores vary from magazine to magazine with individual preferences, but I've personally never witnessed an anomaly of such magnitude.

This is a shame because I'm sure a lot of people will be put off by this conflict of opinions when, in PSPro's opinion, this is a game that can and will be enjoyed by just about anyone who's prepared to give it a chance.

Super Tennis veterans (or indeed Smash Tennis on the SNES veterans) will be instantly at home with many of the controls, but players weaned on the likes of the below par Break Point, Hyper Tennis or Sampras Extreme may well struggle to get to grips with the game's cartoony style graphics and arcade style gameplay.

Personally I was well into it right from the start, but I know from the reactions of other members of the team that this isn't going to be the case for everyone. Some people found it too frustrating to play at first, but as the timing of the shots started to come more and more naturally, each and every dissenter was gradually won over. Smash Court Tennis now justifiably joins the ranks of other bona fide office favourites such as Worms and International Track & Field.

The main thing that adds to initial frustration is also one of the game's best features – each of the 10 courts is completely different to the others and therefore you need to adjust your playing style accordingly (something which, while still getting to grips with the game's mechanics, can prove to be quite tricky). How each of the courts is different can be found elsewhere in this review in, a nice little box, but for now it's enough to say that the ball reacts exactly how you would expect it to do on each different surface.

The main alteration you need to make to the way you play is to the timing of your shots. On some surfaces the ball will bounce higher and much more slowly and at first you'll find yourself swinging far too early so you need to condition yourself to delay the shot. It is quite difficult to do at first but eventually you reach a point where it all clicks into place and you find yourself adjusting automatically to each different environment without even thinking about it.

You'll also need to think about changing your shot selection, depending on the court. There are four basic shots available, easily chosen by pressing one of the four joystick buttons. They are: Normal shot (not particularly hard but can be aimed with almost pin point accuracy), a stronger shot (more risky but deadly when you open up the court), a standard lob and an absolutely thunderous drive which





There is a choice of 10 different courts – each one plays very differently to the next



The game caters for fans of both the base line style of play and fast and furious net play



Doubles is great fun with three friends and a multi tap, but can be dull solo

is very difficult to pull off with any great degree of success. Some of these are more effective on a particular surface but there are no hard and fast rules so finding out what's what is essentially trial and error.

Aim the shot by pressing the D-pad as you hit the ball allowing you not only to direct the ball left and right, but also adjust the length of your return accordingly. Pushing diagonally up and to the left while at the bottom of the court will see you hitting the ball deep into the left hand corner.

The angle and length are also affected by the amount of time you hold the D-pad in that direction and the timing of your swing. It's not simply a case of getting near the ball, having a swing and planting a perfect drive right on the join of the baseline and sideline. A number of factors have to be taken into account very quickly and even then you'll still miss the line quite regularly. Just like in real tennis I suppose.

Just like in the real thing there are a number of different types of match to play. Firstly, practice which pretty much speaks for itself, as does an



Choose from any of the 24 characters – each with their own special skills and attributes. There are 12 male and 12 female players



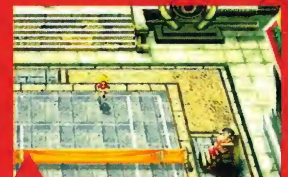
In Club Mode, the higher the league you're competing in, the greater the value of the prize should you win

See You In Court!



I LOVE TAHITI

Played on the beach to a backdrop of dancing 'Hula Girls' this is probably the slowest court with the balls bouncing very low indeed. Quite tricky to get to grips with



MAGIC THAILAND

This oriental court has a distinctly mystical feel to it. The balls bounce high and fast off this hard court making timing a nightmare for the novice. Looks nice though



AEGEAN HOLIDAY

Another hard court leading to more hard hitting, fast moving rallies. Net play is a good idea if your reflexes are quick enough, if not you'll fair better gluing your feet to the baseline



MEDIEVAL GERMANY

If playing indoors in front of royalty isn't enough to put you off, this low bouncing indoor court also plays host to some bumbling servants who insist on dropping a tea tray just as you are about to hit the ball



NATURE TRIP CANADA

If you go down to the woods today you're sure to find er, some people playing tennis. And a bear who gets most disgruntled should you whack him with the ball



NAMCOURT TOKYO

The first of the tournament courts is hard, the ball bounces high and is generally the most boring of all the courts to play on. Not one for if you're out to have a laugh



NAMCOURT USA

Most notable for it's delightful Pacman motif on the court's surface this one plays exactly like Namcourt Tokyo in every way



NAMCOURT FRANCE

This court plays quite slowly as it's made of clay. The ball kicks up in the air making the timing very different to the other courts



NAMCOURT AUSTRALIA

Another hard, fast and high bouncing court which is very similar to both Tokyo and the USA, the only difference being this one has a Mappy design on the floor



NAMCOURT ENGLAND

The spiritual home of tennis is faithfully recreated with a fast grass court on which good net play gives you an advantage every time. Base line play is for experts only

Smash Court Tennis

► exhibition match. The most interesting option for the solo player is Club Mode. This essentially lets you have a career as a tennis professional but with an added incentive over the tennis games in the past.

Whereas the goal in other games was to reach the top (as it is here) the only reward was personal satisfaction and a career earnings total. Smash Court Tennis takes a different approach. Your reward for winning a match will be something that you can use to build up and design your own court.

Before each match begins you will be offered a choice of around five different prizes (which vary in value depending on the quality of the opponent) and you can win anything from a bamboo chair for the umpire to sit on to a cheerleader to stand at the back (wouldn't that amount to slavery though?).

This wholly novel approach really drives you on as you try and build the best possible court. Then, when you've beaten everyone, you get to challenge



The key is in guessing where the next shot will end up

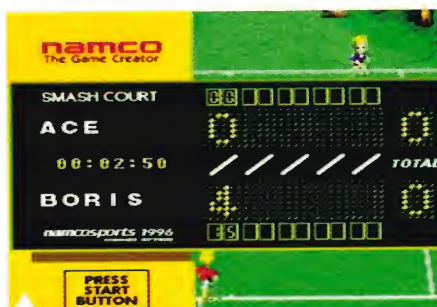
players to come and play on your home court! At anytime you can rearrange things to make them more aesthetically pleasing – tennis fans with a flair for interior decorating

are going to be in something close to heaven.

For such a simple game there is a surprising amount of depth to Smash Court Tennis, both in the actual playing of a match and in the way the whole thing is set up – leading to a long term challenge you won't tire of in a hurry.

Not only is this one of the best tennis games I've ever played on any machine, it is by far and away the best tennis game on the PlayStation. If motion captured semi-realistic players mean you can't have a game that plays as well as this, I'll go with the 16bit look any day of the week.

In an ideal world we would have the gameplay of Smash Court seamlessly blended with the realistic looks of Sampras Extreme I suppose. It's far from an ideal world as yet, but this will more than pass the time until the developers pull their fingers out and manage to get both elements right instead of just one – or neither in the case of Break Point. Essential for two players (or even four with a multi tap, thanks to the doubles option), but probably only a necessity for the solo player if they really love their tennis games.

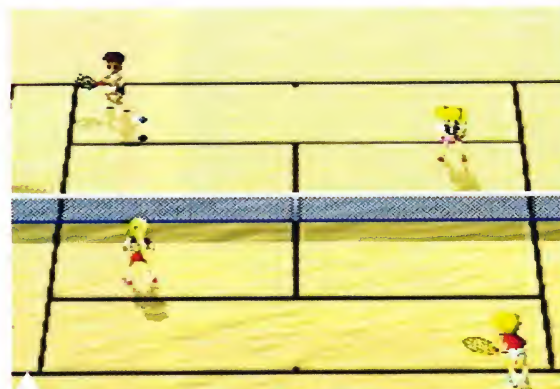


As you'd expect, the scoring system works as in real life – with the option of one, three or five sets

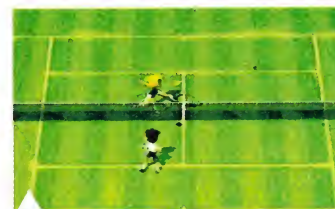


Serving can take some getting used to. One press will toss the ball up and another will swing at it

The five novelty courts are perhaps the most fun to play on, with the strange things happening all the time. But when it comes down to the serious business you should opt for one of the Namcourts



Doubles matches can be played with anything from 1 to 4 human players, opening up the option to just about everyone



Learning how to do a good passing shot is absolutely vital in this game



Even dubious line calls have been included, for added frustration

PRO SCORE

GAME Smash Court Tennis
CONTACT 0171 447 1600

GENRE Sports Sim
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Sony
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 7
SOUND 7
GAMEPLAY 9
LASTABILITY 8

It may hark back to the days when the SNES ruled the roost in some ways, but there's no disputing that this blasts an ace past every other tennis related effort on the PlayStation so far. Unbelievably good multi player, surprisingly good solo and great value for money for tennis fans. It may not have stunning looks or amazing animation, but what it does have is depth, lastability and most important, playability – fortunately this is the main area in which Smash Court excels.

9
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

DAN I hated it at first, but once you've sussed the controls this is something anyone can enjoy. Fantastic
ANDY An instant hit from the first moment you have a play. This will be a tricky one to better
JAY This isn't a beat'em-up or racing game and I'm far too shallow to even consider having a go
ALEX By far the best tennis game on the PlayStation and possibly the best two-player contest around



Name

To: Warwickshire County Council

Department of Health

Petition against Dominic Wheadon

We, the undersigned, wish to submit an official complaint against Mr Dominic Wheadon of 13 Turret Grove, Coventry.

Despite repeated requests from residents Mr Wheadon refuses to remove the 25ft hardboard Venus Fly Trap, pig and palm tree from his garden. The said monstrosities attract hordes of undesirable tourists to the street and causes frequent disruption in an otherwise quiet, respectable area.

Mr Wheadon also refuses to remove the skunks, turtles and bandicoots which continually escape from his garden and foul the footpaths and grass verges.

Lastly we would demand that Mr Wheadon be restrained from playacting scenes and disturbance all night long, lowering the tone of the neighbourhood.

Name

Address

Gemma Sparkling-Sam	17 Turret Grove
David Sparkling-Sam	"
Mr Joseph Brennan	"
Professor C. Hobsbaum	3 St. John's Way
Mrs J. Hobsbaum	14 Carnegie House, Ingelwood Rd.
Mrs W. Collins	14 Parkside Ave Ingelwood Rd.
Mr G.C. Collins	26 Chester Close
Edwinton Cobb	26 Chester Close
George Healy Hayner	4 Plympton Ave
JUDE A. HEGINS	40 Ingelwood Road.
	32 Turret Grove



International Superstar Soccer Deluxe

Oh I could fly without wings, on the back of Reidy's kings, at three o'clock I'm as happy as can be, cos the good times they are here...



The open game and the s. league are the options you'll find yourself plumping for



As mentioned above, the short league is a mini league of up to six teams - ideal for post-match parties on the PlayStation at home



Every footy game these days has untold options and ISSSD is no exception. You can even edit the strips!

Yes, it's a mini league! Seeing as no-one will play with me I'm stuck on my own with a World War 2 sim

International Super Star Soccer Deluxe has to be the longest PlayStation title out, so it'll be remembered for that if nothing else.

Football teams with long names are notorious for being crap. Take for example Brighton and Hove Albion - the last time their fans had something to shout about was when the team kit was re-designed to showcase horrendous blue and white striped shorts. Yes, shorts. Preston North End as well. The only thing they've achieved lately is to draw a nice picture of the last good player they had - Tom Finney (who's now about 80) - on their seats in the stands.

Footy teams with short names, on the other hand, are always good, such as AC Milan, Barcelona and Sunderland. This rule doesn't apply to PlayStation football games - in fact it's very much the opposite. So leave FIFA and Onside well alone. Seriously. They're worse than Wales.

So what's ISSSD like? First impressions don't help its cause that's for sure. For a start, it looks almost identical to its SNES counterpart and that never did much for me.

Secondly, the presentation is a strange mish-

mash of graphic and typographical styles with all sorts of garish clashes going on. Thirdly, you soon realise that only international teams are available to select - one of my favourite football game gripes. The squad names are daft made up ones too. This riles many footy game enthusiasts as contrary to what anyone says you can't have copyright on a person's name. Let's face it, there has to be more than one A. Shearer in the world (although Newcastle's thick fans would have you believe otherwise).

So it's kick-off time and true to form the best two teams are Brazil and Germany - a fair enough choice on Konami's part as they're the World and European Champions respectively. The initial problem is passing. At any one time there's never more than about four players on screen, nor is there a significant area of the pitch shown.

A Defender-style map is ever-present at the foot of the screen, but it's neither use nor ornament. It looks archaic (Defender's 15 years old for God's sake) and if you more than cast a glance at it you've lost the ball quicker than it takes Gazza to down a pint (or his wife). ▶



The pre-match coin-toss is a poorly depicted hand-sliding incident

GENRE COMPARISON

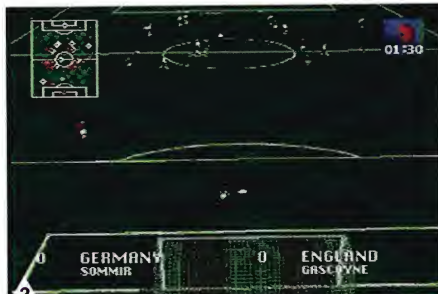
Game Adidas Power Soccer
Software House Psygnosis

Psygnosis' Adidas Power Soccer is similar in concept and content to International Super Star Soccer Deluxe. While it is undoubtedly better looking than its Konami counterpart, it doesn't hold the same long-term appeal - APS, if you will, the Ginola, ISSSD the Beardsley

My PlayStation Football League Table



1 Olympic Soccer - US Gold



2 Striker '96 - Warner Interactive



3 International Super Star Soccer Deluxe - Konami



4 Adidas Power Soccer - Psygnosis



5 Actua Soccer - Gremlin



6 FIFA '96



7 Namco European Soccer - Namco



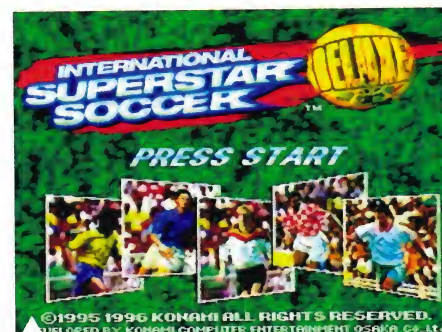
8 Winning Eleven - Namco



9 FIFA '97



10 Onside - Telstar



The intro screen which reminded me of my card collecting days. If you had two of the same, it was a 'swap', if you had three it was a 'givvie'

International Super

► A lot of the time, therefore, you can't even see the player you're passing to until you've released the ball. This problem is alleviated, however, once you master running with the ball.

A good tactic for beginners and intermediate players is to run with the ball for a second or two, release it, and repeat this until you're somewhere near your opponent's penalty area, by which time you can have a shot.

This is where gameplay problem number two arises. In common with nearly all PlayStation football games (apart from Adidas Power Soccer in arcade mode), goal scoring is initially incredibly difficult. So difficult, in fact, that in the first four games I played the only goals scored were from rebounds and penalties, the highest score in 'normal' time (i.e. five minutes each way) being one-all.

Again, however, it's a case of practice makes perfect, and although ISSSD doesn't have an obvious optimum scoring zone, an on-target shot from the inside of the penalty area with a dab of aftertouch (more on this later) will always result in either a parry from the 'keeper so there's a chance of a rebound, or a tip over by the 'keeper in which case you can keep the pressure on from the resultant corner kick.

Aftertouch, the video game parlance for swerve, is applied in ISSSD by holding down the d-pad immediately after you've released your shot. The



If you want to play a long pass, you'll need to look to the map for inspiration or else the ball will go to an opponent or out of play



Yes it is! The Welsh are leading – complete with stereotypical names. Oh Mr Jenkins, Ivor's not feeling very well today... choo choo

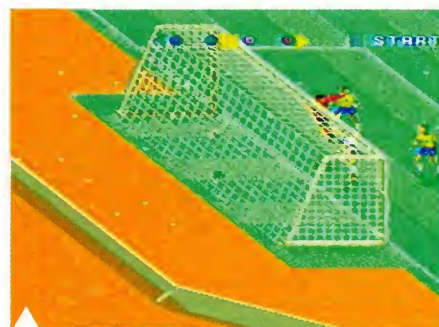


Now that's what I call unlikely. Wales go one-nil up against European Champions Germany

The Brazil team in all its glory looking rather like all the other sides except with a different kit on



Annoying/daft feature alert! The half way line flags are positioned on the touchlines. They should be outside



It's there! In most PlayStation footy games, headed goals are rare, but not in ISSSD

star Soccer Deluxe

longer you hold down the shot button (all the 'action' buttons are configurable), the higher the ball will go and the longer you hold the d-pad to the left or right will affect the flight of the ball accordingly.

Furthermore, pulling back on the d-pad after shooting, so long as the shot has been hit high enough, results in a dipping shot. Mastery of this is tough, but makes for some spectacular goals. It's even possible, but not probable, to score directly from an inswinging corner Matthew Le Tissier style. Like Adidas Power Soccer in arcade mode, the emphasis is firmly on learning the 'special moves' – such as the feint and the heel lift – and using them at the right time as much as tactics and team selection.

Although the players' movements have more of an arcade look than a true to life appearance (this is an arcade conversion after all), the gameplay is often more like real football than most football video games and this is where ISSSD picks up its points.

Goalkeepers come out to narrow the angle and catch mis-hit long balls, well-timed tackles result in the defender hooking his foot around the ball and shots can end up anywhere – in the back of the net, over the bar, wide, and against the bar or post. Football games need an element of unpredictability to re-create the fickle nature of the real sport. In this respect, ISSSD hammers aesthetically pleasing footy games such as Actua which suffers from limited gameplay.

With a league set-up option to boot (one of the famous Sensible Soccer's most endearing features), ISSSD is more of an honest toiler than a talented playmaker but can take pride in the fact that although its only noticeable enhancement over its 16-bit non-deluxe version is a small injection of pace, it still more than holds its own in the PlayStation football league table.

PRO SCORE

GAME Int Superstar Soccer Deluxe
CONTACT 01895 853 000

GENRE Sports sim
RELEASE DATE Out now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Konami
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 6

SOUND 8

GAMEPLAY 7

LASTABILITY 8

It's always a risk releasing a game which can be compared to other, better, ones in the same genre. ISSSD isn't a marked improvement on its 16-bit incarnation – Konami working on the principle of 'if it's not broken, why fix it?' – but plays well enough to push the bigger names such as FIFA and Actua down the pecking order. Olympic Soccer and Striker '96 are a much better bet, however, and unless you're rich and can't get enough PlayStation footy games you're best off going for US Gold's and Warner's aforementioned efforts.

7½
OVERALL OUTTA 10

ANDY It breaks no new ground whatsoever but plays far better than any FIFA game ever seen

DAN I'd rather eat my own feet than play a footy game, but this looks cheap and nasty

JAY Looks and plays just like the old SNES version, so why bother converting it? Do something new Konami!

STEVE I'm in Australia at the moment so I couldn't care less, but I'm sure I'd pseudo like it

Blazing Dragons

What do you get if you cross Monty Python with some cartoony graphics and plenty of annoying voices? Anyone? Blazing Dragons, that's what



Conversing with the other characters is a crucial part of the proceedings if any progress is to be made



You will need to collect further pieces for your bag in order to progress through the kingdom



The king has his knights gathered around the square table to brief them



This is quite literally the CAT-a-pult. Hit nine out of ten guards to get the chance to batter the big boss and obtain a new object for use later



Once out of the castle you will need to use your map to travel to new locations and find new items for your inventory

Monty Python has been around since time began or so it seems and while this is a Medieval adventure it contains plenty of Pythonesque humour. In brief it's a cartoon adventure where the dragons are the main characters and humans take a back seat.

You will take on the forces of evil as the lowly dragon Flicker, a loser who makes his pathetic living by inventing little objects while dreaming of becoming a knight and winning the hand of the king's daughter in marriage.

Since the king is retiring he has set a challenge for his knights of the square table (ho ho) to win both the crown and his daughter's hand. Young Flicker now sees his chance and this is where you will come in.

As you progress you will need to combine numerous items you've collected along the way to form new inventions to get you through certain stages. You will need to pick up your invention book on the way to give you some clues as to what you'll need to collect to progress beyond certain points.

As with many previous adventures you will need to interact with other characters to obtain ideas, clues and information. Some pieces of information are pretty well hidden but if you get yourself tuned into everything you may pick up on a vital clue.

Blazing Dragons relies heavily on Python humour and although at first it's a novelty and a little bit of a laugh it soon becomes very tedious as the deaf old lady in the library hears things incorrectly and

the short sighted knight attacks his own castle. The themes don't change throughout and new characters seem to go out of their way to grab a laugh.

The Monty Python link continues with the voices which could have come straight from The Life Of Brian or other such films not to mention the inclusion of Terry Jones who adds his voice into the proceedings.

While you are exploring the kingdom you will come across plenty of strange characters and many weird occurrences but the most interesting of which are the mini arcade games which include the CAT-a-pult, where you literally have to fire cats at targets and dragon thumb wrestling which all tend to try to break up the tedium as best they can. They are all in some way vital for progression so they shouldn't be ignored.

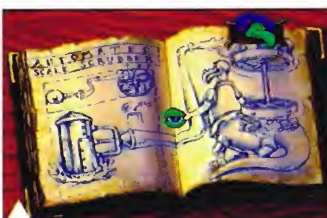
Graphically it's very cartoon orientated and apparently there is actually a Blazing Dragons cartoon in the offing. This doesn't change in any way throughout and basically means that it's very bright almost all of the time.

The interaction between the characters is actually executed well but the whole childish feel may be too much for some to bear in the end.

Controlling Flicker on his quest is actually very easy to pick up with a toggle through his abilities being executed by tapping the R1 button. With this button you can walk, talk, pick up, or open things. The X button executes all commands and the



Just one of the many puzzles you will need to solve if you're to progress any further. How do you get past this waterfall



This handy dishwasher must be developed using collected items to get you out of spending the entire game with a pair of Marigolds on.





The other knights are hapless halfwits who spend more time working out what day it is than getting on with their challenge



The princess is the apple of Flickers' eye and he'll do anything to win her over, even become a knight. What a looker she is too



Flicker begins his day just like any other at the crack of dawn as he's woken by his alarm clock. The day ahead will be tough for a mere nobody

triangle will bring up your inventory.

The inventory takes the form of a sack which you will carry at all times and although it looks limited as to how much you can carry it is in fact infinitely deep and can never be filled.

Developed by Crystal Dynamics who have also been responsible for a handful of releases to date, usually on the platform front, most notably with the recent Pandemonium it proves they are capable of more than one train of thought. The soon to be released Legacy Of Kain is a very dark and gloomy affair (check out the preview this issue) and in a contrast to the cute and colourful kingdom.

As with any kind of adventure you will be stumped from time to time as to what you could possibly have missed to progress and spend what feels like an eternity wandering aimlessly seeing if you can use the locks of hair on the injured cat all to no avail. This isn't a fault as such but has always proved a bit of a put off for many in the past. Blazing Dragons does nothing to address this problem but that's what adventure games are all about at the end of the day and that's its problem. It does nothing wrong apart from being an adventure and this is why many people will detest this.

To sum it all up, Blazing Dragons has many good and an equal number of bad points but if you fancy a bit of a change from gloom, doom, guns and speeding around in futuristic speed machines then it's worth a look. But only briefly mind.



Whatever you do, don't cross the king when he's angry because he goes green and starts yelling



Help meeee! Pandora's box gets opened and lo and behold there's a surrealistsculpture inside



If you concentrate hard enough on this screenshot, you'll see that every character on it is green



This is one game that you can't play with the sound turned off. So it's a right rip off for deaf people

PRO SCORE

GAME Blazing Dragons
CONTACT 0171 384 7500

GENRE Arcade Adventure
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE BMG
PRICE £44.99

GRAPHICS 6

SOUND 5

GAMEPLAY 7

LASTABILITY 6

At times Blazing Dragons is excruciatingly annoying, occasionally enthralling and sometimes just downright dull, but you can't accuse it of not trying to be a little different. I found it a pleasure to play for a short while until all of the voices, terrible puns and quips all became a bit too much. It's nevertheless going to appeal to a few of you and keep many a punter quiet for a while. How long for exactly is another matter entirely - I didn't reach the end, but nor did I have any inclination to do so.

6
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

ALEX Not my type of game at all, but at least it's presented pretty well. One for PC owners I reckon

DAN I'm sure this is very pleasant, but after five minutes of stupid voices I was ready to commit murder

JAY With Broken Sword and Discworld already available, I can see no logical point in buying this

STEVE Can't avoid comparing it with Discworld and it's not that good. A decent second purchase though

Namco Museum

Volume 3

Come! Join us in our time-travelling DeLorean. When we reach 88mph we'll hurtle back in time, not to save the future, but to remind ourselves that old games really were a load of old cack

And so we reach the third instalment of Namco's epic rewriting of history, designed to convince you that it created every game of note ever. Once again you get six titles dragged up from the mud of history with a special net, all tied together by a virtual museum dedicated to the games.

If you've never seen any previous museums, basically you can scroll through a 3-D building, with annexes for each of the games stuffed with old merchandise and technical data on these video fossils, as well as the games themselves.

And they're no mere rewrites. Oh no, this is the original arcade machine code running via a Playstation emulator! Or something like that. The series has been a bit hit and miss so far, but we'll take a look at each area of the museum in turn and see if this effort is going to have us all scurrying back to Limahl haircuts and nylon pants, or whether we'll turn up our noses and get on with beating Command & Conquer.

Cleverly, rendered 3-D light sourced polygons are used to recreate tiny, bland sprites. Isn't science great?

Welcome to the Museum. £40 to get in, and there isn't even a gift shop



Here's the original arcade machine. The cruel irony is that it looks better than the game it represents



Erm...a very similar screenshot to the previous one, except I've killed a few more aliens

Galaxian

The Game: A real golden oldie, and probably the most famous in the package. It's Space Invaders by any other name, with the added excitement of swooping aliens that fire back at you. Given its definitive classic status, this is the one most likely to induce pangs of nostalgia in the over 20s, and howls of derision from those too young to understand.

The trouble is that it's not aged well at all. It's sluggish, boring and you can only have one of your missiles on screen at a time. This slows down the gameplay to a snail's pace, and after four waves of exactly the same formations your mind starts to wander. It's very authentic, but given its sheer ancientness, that's not really something to be proud of. Fond memories can only get you so far, and this barely makes it around the block.

The Museum: An unsurprising sci fi theme at work here, coupled with an astonishing lack of things to look at. Obviously, the lack of soft toys has something to do with the difficulty in marketing cuddly spaceships but even so this is a run straight to the game section.

Nostalgia Rating: 7

Modern Equivalent: X2

Ironic Retro Equivalent: Look-In magazine



As always, the 'behind the scenes' info is the very definition of education and entertainment in one package



Another similar screenshot, but here's a new twist: In this one, it's my spaceship that's exploding

Ms. PacMan

The Game: To be blunt, this is essentially PacMan coming out of the closet. Absolutely identical to the dot munching original, bar the addition of a pink bow on Pac's head, it's astonishing that Namco got away with this unscrupulous sleight of hand all those years ago.

Mind you, it's as playable and fun as PacMan's always been, for obvious reasons. For a short while you get carried along on a wave of simple memories, but then you start to notice that it's just the same thing over and over again and fall asleep. Not much of a shock, I know, but I can't imagine

anyone being glued to the screen for hours on end without the aid of medieval restraints.

The Museum: Best bit of the entire collection, no question. Walk through the door and you find yourself in a glorious 3-D Pacland. Wander through the garden checking out the Ms PacMan soft toys, and enter the house to say 'Hi' to the lady herself and a PacDog. And don't forget to check out the PacToilet for a Carry On PacMan style gag.

Nostalgia Rating: 7

Modern Equivalent: Final Doom

Ironic Retro Equivalent: The Reynolds Girls



On this exciting level, you must steer Ms PacMan around a maze, eating dots and avoiding ghosts

Scant information, but the photos of pre-Sonic merchandise raise a nostalgic weep



Like all these games, this looks like rubbish, but Dig Dug is actually fun for more than 10 minutes and proves itself as a true classic



If you've got any of these knocking about in the loft, then dig 'em out. They could be worth a pretty penny these days

Dig Dug

The Game: Shockingly, the first game on the compilation that I actually enjoyed playing. I even vaguely remember seeing it when it first appeared in the arcades, but I was probably too short to play it.

It's a sort of Boulder Dash thing, with you pegging it around underground tunnels pumping up monsters and bursting them. You can drop rocks on their heads as well. It's simple, it's fast and highly playable. It's certainly one of the only games included here that I'd call a classic.

It even seems to display a rudimentary artificial intelligence, making it occasionally quite tricky. This is in direct contrast to most of the other games which are so simple by today's standards that you'll stroll through them.

It's difficult to pin down why Dig Dug still works when so many other games on here look awful. Maybe it's just because it's bloody good fun. Yes, that must be it. Not one you'll waste hours on, but cheery enough to warrant a return visit.

The Museum: Like walking into a scene from the game, this shows off the collected Dig Dug paraphernalia in a cave. There's a pleasing lack of circuit boards to look at, and an abundance of cheesy Dig Dug toys and stickers instead.

Nostalgia Rating: 8

Modern Equivalent: Er...Tomb Raider?

Ironic Retro Equivalent: Chorlton and the Wheelies

Pole Position 2

The Game: Essentially the same game that graced the first Namco Museum, this is something of a space filler. In fact, it proves that even in the early days of the software business lazy sequels were the order of the day. However, like all these games, it wears Father Time's unstoppable march all over its next generation face.

It's not even as if it's much fun. It's deceptively fast, but the controls are the opposite of Galaxian's treacly movements. It's over responsive, if anything, and you fly off the track with the slightest flick of your wrist.

Obviously one of the more up-to-date inclusions as you get more than one track to mess about with, and there's even the innovative inclusion of different backgrounds and themes for each circuit. Despite its shortcomings, this is the only game that looks and plays in a remotely modern way and deserves some respect for that.

The Museum: Obviously having used up all the informative titbits the first time around, the accumulated PP2 gubbins suffers from the fact that the game itself was obviously thrown together from the remnants of the first. Nice racing car though.

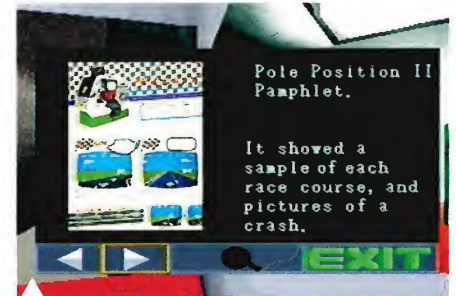
Nostalgia Rating: 6

Modern Equivalent: Formula 1

Ironic Retro Equivalent: Dukes Of Hazzard



Go on, squint a bit and this almost looks like it could be from the '90s. Almost. Pity it plays like a three legged dog with no teeth



Admit it. You've been gagging to see one of these, haven't you? It's a dream come true, thanks to Daddy Namco



Namco Museum Volume 3

Phozon

The Game: The inclusion of this title seems to suggest that Namco is doing some serious barrel scraping for this volume. Not the most renowned game in the world, as nobody here could summon it up from the recesses of memory. It's a prototype puzzle game, with elements of shape arranging that bring to mind a more arcadey Tetris.

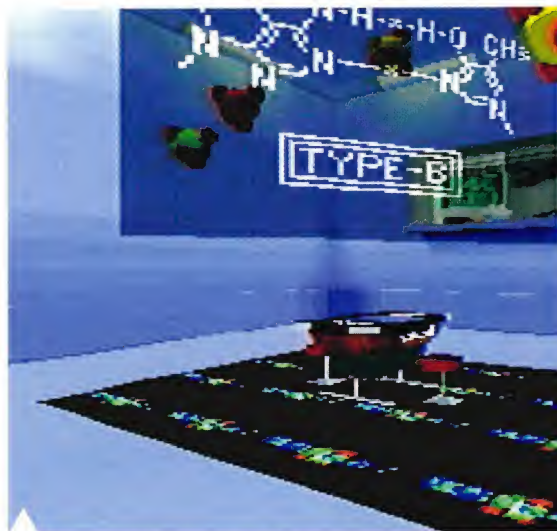
You float about as some sort of atom, collecting other elements to complete designated formations with you as the centrepiece. It sounds quite confusing, and it is really. The point to all this is never quite explained and while it entertains for a half hour or so, tedium soon sets in.

The Museum: As befits such an obscure game, the exhibits on display here are singularly uninspiring. The theme to the room, a science lab, is hardly stunning and the whole area seems to have been tossed in as an afterthought. Just like the game itself.

Nostalgia Rating: 3

Modern Equivalent: Bust A Move 2

Ironic Retro Equivalent: The klipper tile



The Phozon tabel top machine awaits you in its own gleaming science lab, with atoms and that spinning overhead



I think that this is me, having burst. Or something like that. I'm not sure



Look, you'll never play this one so who cares what it looks like?



Green blobs, doors, red and blue fizzy things. Tower Of Druaga had them all

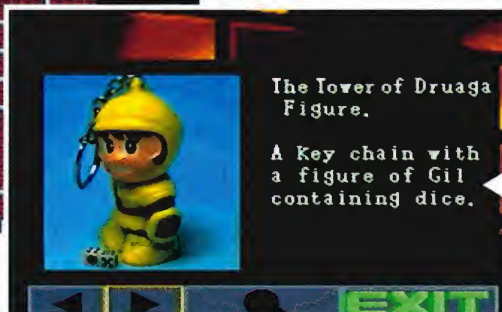


This is the Tower, where the game is kept in the museum. And, boy, is it scary? Well, no actually, but it's not a bad try, eh kids?

The best example of crap Japanese merchandise is this. A key chain? Fine, but why the dice inside?



Handily obscured by a better picture, it's the same as the one above, to be honest



Castle Of Druaga

The Game: Another version of PacMan, but with swords and wizards sprinkled on top. Find the key in the maze, kill the blobs and knights, avoid the grumpy wizard, grab the treasure and leg it through the door. It's basic, but at least the levels change every time you play. There's a good bit of variety in the baddies as well. Spells and potions lift it above the usual games of this era, but it still feels flat.

Trouble is, and this goes for most of the games here, there's just nothing to do. Ten years ago you could get away with having a game that repeated itself endlessly, because people were so in awe of the fledgling technology they overlooked the boredom factor. In its day it's easy to believe that this would have turned heads with its pseudo role playing aspects and randomly generated levels. These days it just looks faintly amusing but actual playability runs out after 10 minutes. Time can be a vicious duchess to the best of us.

The Museum: Ooh, scary. Winding corridors lined with illuminated alcoves lead the way to the game, with kitsch Japanese artwork being the highlight. Enter the game area and Druaga himself towers above you in an impressive but useless manner. Not bad.

Nostalgia Rating: 4

Modern Equivalent: ReLoaded

Ironic Retro Equivalent: The foam pig from Pipkins

PRO SCORE

GAME Namco Museum Volume 3
CONTACT 0171 447 1600

GENRE Compilation
RELEASE DATE Out Now

SOFTWARE HOUSE Sony
PRICE £39.99

GRAPHICS 7

SOUND 5

GAMEPLAY 6

LASTABILITY 3

The first Namco Museum was a diverting curiosity. How we laughed, in a post-modern way, at the idea of using a next generation machine to play games that use all of 10k on the CD. How we giggled as we forgot all about it within an hour. So how shall we react to Volume 3? With a defeated sigh, that's how. Desperate for content, the space is taken up with lack lustre sequels and forgettable obscurities. This is fine if you fancy a boozed up chuckle after the pub, but the joke's just not funny any more.

5
OVERALL
OUTTA 10

ALEX I never thought I'd hear myself saying this, but this collection of retro 'classics' is arse

STEVE I liked the first volume but the series has really gone into overkill now. Total waste of time

ANDY After the first step back into retro it's all gone wrong. The third Namco set doesn't impress

JAY I'd prefer to ride a BMX or do some breakdancing to be honest. Not groovy in the slightest

Terror from the Deep

first they came from the skies...
now look to the earth's oceans for
signs of alien attack in x-com:
terror from the deep,
the superb sequel
to x-com: enemy
unknown!

X·COM®

take
complete
control of
an elite team of
x-com commandos
searching for alien life
beneath the waves in this
sci-fi action strategy game and
follow-up to x-com: enemy unknown!

"creates an atmosphere that has to be
believed. x-com: tftd is probably the
finest most playable strategy game ever
to appear on the playstation."

(playstation pro)

"a fantastic blend of
strategy and arcade action.
a definite contender for
game of the year."

(gamesmaster)



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Hey Big Spender!

Have you got loads of Christmas cash floating around you simply don't know what to do with?

If so, join us as we act like Lottery winners and take you on a whistle-stop shopping spree,

checking out all the peripheral PSX goods on offer and telling you how you go about

compiling the most definitive PlayStation set-up on the planet while we're at it

By Jay Sharples





PADS

1. Hyper Controller

Slightly cheaper than the official ones, these Blaze controllers offer you everything the Sony ones do, plus added Turbo Fire and Slow Motion switch options to play about with. Virtually identical to the 'proper' joypads, these Hyper pads are a sturdy and money-saving alternative. **PRICE: £19.99**

2. The Super UFO PSX Infra-red Joypad System

Bit of a posh name innit? Especially for what amounts to a couple of cable-less joypads. Anyway, these come with a light box that sits on top of the TV allowing you plenty of cable-free playing time. It features a low power consumption device, so you don't have to change the batteries in the pads every two minutes – yes, unfortunately you do have to buy batteries for them!

They come with eight button configuration, a fancy thumb-extender knob for the D pad and a couple of total turbo fire flick switches too. A nice idea these – unfortunately they tend not to work too well unless you've got the light box and the pads perfectly in line. Which, as you can imagine, isn't always possible when concentrating on the screen. **PRICE: £39.99**

3. Control Station A/F Controller

Eight buttons, auto fire and an extra long cord make this Logic 3 unofficial pad a standard extra joypad. Like most of the unofficial ones, it does the job and saves a few pounds. Nothing special, just another pad. **PRICE: £12.99**

4. Station Master Controller

Similar to the Control Station A/F model, except this has slow motion, speed control, semi or hands free auto fire modes and an LED display unit. As before really, although this offers a few more optional extras. Nice, easy to hold, works well, etc etc. **PRICE: £16.99**

5. Official Joypads

Having one pad and loads of two player games isn't fun so if you can't be doing with all these transparent, multi-functional unofficial pads why not plump for the proper Sony ones? They may cost a bit more, but are sturdy little blighters and were made specifically for all PlayStation software. You won't have trouble playing Striker with one of these! **PRICE: £24.99**

6. NeGcon Joypad

Compatible with a wide range of ever-growing PlayStation titles, the neGcon comes into its own when used with several of the many racing games available at the moment. The ergonomic design features a twisting facility which in turn allows for some serious wrist action plus an abundance of silky smooth precision steering. More software titles are on the way that utilise the neGcon pad, so if you're a driving demon check out one of these immediately. **PRICE: £39.99**

7. The Official Sony Specialized asclIPad

All the usual turbo fire, auto fire and slow motion switches are featured on this pad, plus a radically designed grip which is ideal for extended playing time. It does the job well and provides a nice alternative to the official pads. **PRICE: £29.99**

MEMORY CARDS

8. Official Sony Memory Cards

They're official, they fit in the front of your machine and they help save your gaming progress. Most games nowadays require saving at some point, so an investment in a Memory Card is a wise move. And they don't come better than the Sony ones. **PRICE: £19.99**

9. Datel Memory Disc Drive

This somewhat expensive piece of kit enables you to kiss the dreary days of standard Memory Cards goodbye and embrace the wonderful world of the floppy disc drive game saver. Basically you rig this up to the PlayStation and can then save your game progress onto discs instead of the usual method. Of course, the more discs you buy, the more save slots you can use and as you know, floppy discs are 10 a penny nowadays. Pricey, but very handy and perhaps a tad cheaper in the long run. **PRICE: £79.99**

10. Datel 360 Slot Memory Card

This beauty works the same way all other Memory Cards do, except this chubby funster holds a massive 360 game save points. That's as many save points as you'd find on 24 separate normal Memory Cards. Which, when you think about it is quite impressive. **PRICE: £49.99**

11. Datel 120 Slot Memory Card

If you like the idea of that Datel 360 Card, but can't really afford it, why not invest in the slightly cheaper Datel 120? It costs a whole tenner less and features slightly less save spaces (only eight times the space of other cards) but we're sure you'll find it very rewarding. Or something. **PRICE: £39.99**

12. Blaze PSX Memory Cards

Basically 1Meg cards. Not as high quality finish as that of the official ones, but they do their job alright and are slightly easier on your pocket. **PRICE: £19.50**

CABLES

13. Logic 3 Link Cable

It's a cable that links up two PlayStations letting you play head-to-head against your mate. Top stuff. This one has all the plus points of the official Sony one, but of course costs you a lot less. **PRICE: £18.99**

14. Logic 3 PSX Scart Cable

This does the business just like the Sony cables, but won't burn your pocket as much. A nice cheap alternative if you're not particularly bothered about having all the official stuff. **PRICE: £12.99**

15. Logic 3 Joypad Extension Cable

Like the Blaze 'Xtender', this extends your joypad lead by a fair old whack. We don't know exactly how much longer it makes – we've not bothered measuring it, but it works, it stops you pulling your PlayStation off the table and means you don't have to endure TV blindness whilst sitting two feet away from the screen when playing your games. **PRICE: £6.99**

16. Scart Cable

If you want a clearer and altogether better picture on your telly when playing on your PlayStation, why not invest in a Rage PSX Scart Cable? A must for superior picture definition. Or so they say. **PRICE: £12.99**

17. Official Sony Link-Up Cable

If you and your pals own two PlayStations, two TVs and two copies of a certain game between you, link-up gaming is yours for the taking. wipEout2097, Destruction Derby, Ridge Racer and most other driving

titles can be linked-up, so if you have all the above, why not experience the link mode?

PRICE: £19.99

18. X Tender

If you've got either a NTSC pad with one of those annoying short leads or an absolutely massive front room, you'll love these beauties. The Blaze X Tender 'xtends' your joypad cable by a good two metres allowing you to sit wherever you want during playing time, plus it reduces your eyes' exposure to the nasty TV glare demons. **PRICE: £7.99**

STICKS

19. Official Specialized JoyStick

This is allegedly designed to take the upmost punishment under beat'em-up conditions. It features microswitches for both slow motion and turbo modes as well as a slideable turbo switch which allows you to dictate the number of turbo fires up to a maximum of 36 times a second. Crikey! **PRICE: £49.99**

20. Official Analog Joystick

Beat'em-up arcade fiends will love this one. It's a dual stick analog controller, offering optional unique directional control for both digital and analog so it really feels like you're down the arcades kicking butt. It's pretty handy for flight sims too. More of a professional tool of the trade as opposed to a 'use it once in a blue moon' type purchase though. **PRICE: £59.99**

21. Flight Force Pro Dual Analogue Joystick

This is a similar beast to the one noted above, but comes as two separate units linked together by the ever-present cables. This is more useable as a flight sim tool than for beat'em-ups or whatever. You'll find configuring the buttons to your own specifications improves your enjoyment massively. It may not look as solid, sturdy or cool as the official one, but does the business all the same. **PRICE: £59.99**

22. Pro Arcade Joystick

Another stick from the Blaze collection, this Pro Arcade jobbie features an eight button layout with fully microswitched auto Fire, turbo

Hey Big Spender!

fire and slow motion extras. The obligatory table-top suction pads are all over the bottom for stable stick wiggling and there's even a little bank of LED turbo indicators. It's kinda tacky, but does the job fairly well.
PRICE: £34.99

AND ALL THE REST...

23. Avenger Light Gun
This Blaze firearm is a bog-standard light gun compatible with all light gun games. All one of them. Yes, Die Hard Trilogy is all this baby works with at present, with the Jap import title Horned Owl rumoured to be on its way soon.

As a light gun it does the job, but as a stylish piece of equipment it fails miserably. It looks pants and as opposed to making you feel 'tooled up' it just makes you feel like a tool waving a wad of plastic about.
PRICE: £29.99

24. VRF1 Analogue Arcade Steering Wheel

Ideal for flight sims and fully compatible with the likes of Ridge Racer, wipEout and Destruction Derby. This multi-adjustable angled wheel from Blaze costs a little less than the infamous Mad Catz and offers owners several fingertip analogue buttons and microswitches to while away the hours with. It won't suit every players needs though, the button configurations can prove a tad user-unfriendly on specific software, such as F1. Try before you buy!
PRICE: £59.99

25. Dattel Action Replay Pro

Action Replay carts have been around for yonks now. The SNES and Mega Drive owners probably still have one of these tucked away in a drawer somewhere and now Dattel have issued this fabulous PlayStation version.

It carries hundreds of built-in cheat codes so owners can update their records direct from Dattel. It also doubles as a huge Memory Card and allows you to doctor your games to your playing preference so the on-screen character can jump higher, run faster, punch harder etc etc etc. Not a bad little device to own, if not slightly pricey.
PRICE: £54.99

26. Predator Light Gun

Now this is a gun. It's big, bold and comes with auto fire, auto speed selection, auto load bullet mode, auto load with auto fire mode and a pre-set bullet quantity auto load facility too.

For God's sake, it even has a bank

of LEDs running up the side of it if you're still not satisfied! Another one of its many features is a Dual Saturn and PlayStation connector, which may not be of any great interest to any PlayStation owner but is a nice addition. This gun is perfect for any light gun game (well Die Hard, although there has been a few complaints about its compatibility of late) and looks a lot more chunky and altogether manly than the somewhat weedy TJ Hooker-esque Blaze effort. You are a bullet-pumping outlaw with one of these in your hands, except you won't fool anyone in the real world due to its faded-grey appearance. Cool enough though.
PRICE: £29.99

27. Official PlayStation Mouse

Discworld, Broken Sword, X COM, Warhammer – the amount of mouse configured software is rising rapidly, so if you're a point-and-click kinda guy, forking out for one of these babies should be a worthwhile purchase. You even get a free PlayStation mouse mat with it!
PRICE: £24.99

28. The Logic 3 Speaker Range

Rig your console up to any of the Logic bass boxes and your sonic enhancement will shoot through the roof. Full details on pricing was unfortunately unavailable at the time of going to press.

29. Official PlayStation Multi-tap

Endorsed by the blokes at Sony, this Multi-tap is a must for anyone who owns and frequently plays multi-player games. International Track & Field, Olympic Soccer, Supersonic Racers, Blast Chamber, Street Racer – you'll be needing one of these if you've got any of the above games. It adds to the excitement and getting involved in anything up to eight player action is a good, wholesome gaming experience – especially at Christmas when the family's all snuggled up around a roaring Yuletide fire.
PRICE: £32.99 *

30. PlayStation Ltd Edition Travel Bag

Throwing your machine into an old Safeway carrierbag every time you nip round to your pals for a spot of interactive tomfoolery isn't going to do it any good at all. One way to avoid damage, scratches and to stop it getting wet (while at the same time looking mighty cool), is to get yourself

one of these official – yet highly limited edition – record bags. They're only available from certain retail outlets though, so you may have to hunt one out.

They can be use for any purpose of course, being a bag, but it's sure fire way to keep your machine intact. If you can't find one of these rarities, any sturdy record bag will do the job.
PRICE: £14.99 *

31. TecnoPlus Freedom Pro

Bit of a weird one this. A very bizarre looking twin grip peripheral. You have one part of the controller in one hand with a load of certain functions on it and your other hand holds the other half with all its specific functions. Why? We don't know, but practice with one of these will allegedly make you unbeatable.
PRICE: £19.99 *

32. The Aura Interactor

You strap it to your back, connect it to your PlayStation and the vibrations are meant to pulsate along to the on-screen action (such as getting hit in Tekken) but in all honesty you'd get more interaction by sellotaping a bag of gerbils to your back and occasionally leaning back in your chair. And at £70 a throw, they must be taking the piss.
PRICE: £69.99 *

Note: The items marked * do not feature in the main photograph. This is because we'd lost our Multi-tap, the bag looked crap on the photo, the Freedom Pro Pad wasn't available at the time of the photo shoot and the Aura Interactor is just plain rubbish and we couldn't be bothered putting it in.

All the items should be currently available in your local game emporium. If they're not, either badger the hapless shop assistant to order you one or alternatively give the relevant chaps a call on the following numbers:

For the Official Sony merchandise, call 0171 447 1615. For information on the Dattel range of Memory Cards, call 01782 744707. Give Spectra Video a bell on 0181 900 0024 if you fancy some of their goods, or the Logic 3 stuff. Fire International is the place to ring for any of the Blaze or Rage products featured. They can be contacted on 01302 750698. And finally, TecnoPlus are responsible for the two handed joystick thingie. Their number is 01483 718077. Oh yeah, the Aura Interactor can be unearthed by calling 0161 973 0505. But I wouldn't bother if I were you.

Thanks go out to the chaps at Dattel, Fire International, Chris at Spectra Video and Guy Pearce at Sony HQ for supplying us with all the sample products for this feature. Erm, you don't want any of it back do you?

No PlayStation set-up would be complete without a wad of wicked software, so we've picked out what we consider to be the best of the currently available bunch. You may already own some of the games listed below, but make it a personal mission of yours to get your grubby hands on each and every one of 'em if you really want the best collection in town.

wipEout2097

Link-up mode compatible 3D beast

Soviet Strike

Search and destroy army romp

Crash Bandicoot

Platform game of the year?

Formula One

The official and best techy F1 sim



Tekken 2

Remixed update of an arcade great



Die Hard Trilogy

Three top games on one disc



Final Doom

More levels and a lot more blood

Ridge Racer Revolution

A Namco racing spectacular

Namco Arcade Vol.1

Reworked original arcade classics

Resident Evil

Capcom's excellent zombie hunt

Worms

Simplistic, but hellishly addictive

Actua Golf

Gremlin deliver the on-green goods



International Track & Field

The best four-player game on earth



Burning Road

An all-round rollicking racer

Olympic Soccer

A tad dated, but still the best around

X COM: Terror From The Deep

Hunt for aliens under the sea

Star Gladiator

Stunning Star Wars-esque beat 'em-up

NBA Jam Extreme

Comedy basketball extravaganza

Tomb Raider

Core Design's must-have adventure

Pandemonium

Psuedo 3-D platform corker

Command & Conquer

Perfect conversion of the PC classic



How Was It For

**So, another year passed into
dust. It's a time for quiet
contemplation and intense
speculation. It's a time for
paracetamol and
swearing you'll never
drink again. It's also a
time for us to take
advantage of your
weakened state and be
incredibly nosy. So we're sure
you won't mind if we ask just
what you thought of the 12
months we all knew and loved as
1996. Jot down your thoughts and
send the form or a photocopy,
we're not arsed either way, to our
usual stamp-saving Freepost
address. The first 10 polls
retrieved from our rotating
sombbrero will receive bundles of
games, videos, books and general
rubbish from our ever increasing
pile of multimedia entertainment
bribes. And remember, we can
smell lies like farts in a car.**

You?

SECTION 1

PLAYSTATIONS AND ALL THAT

1. What, in your opinion, were the best three games of '96? List your favourite first, it makes our life so much easier.

2. And, don't be shy, what were the worst three games of '96?

3. Which was the hottest software company of the year?

4. What was the most eye-catching game ad of the year?

5. What was the most over-hyped game?

6. Were there any fantastic games that you feel didn't get the respect they deserved? If so, name 'em.

7. What was the best add-on of the year? Lightguns, steering wheels, vibrating backpacks, things like that.

8. What game are you most looking forward to in '97?

9. Will you be deserting the Sony camp for a brand new Nintendo64 in March, or what?

10. What's been your preferred way of getting games? Buying, renting, exchanging or simply stealing them?

SECTION 2

THE SCARY WORLD OUTSIDE

1. Which three albums kept you tapping your toes while you were hammering joypads in darkened rooms?

2. Which popular music single sums up the year for you?

3. On the odd occasion when you left the house to go to the cinema, which three films had you yakking all the way home in the car with their sheer greatness?

4. What were the best three TV programmes from terrestrial telly, satellite, or even that new fangled cable thing?

5. What was your favourite gig/festival/club/night out of the year, and why?

6. What was your tippie of choice when on the razzle? Fizzy pop brands will do, just in case you're not hairy enough to get bevied yet.

7. And, when the midnight munchies struck, what was the calorie loaded snack product you automatically demanded at the 24 hour garage?

8. On average, were you more or less attractive to the objects of your desire this year? Why?

9. Everyone has a lucky item of clothing. We've all got lucky smocks, for instance. Which designer garment did you prefer, when strutting your stuff?

10. If you went on holiday this year, where did you go? And on a scale from 1 to 10, how 'bangin' was it?

SECTION 3

GENERAL NOSINESS

1. What's your most enduring memory of 1996?

2. What or who would you be quite happy to see a lot less of next year?

3. What or who will be sadly missed in the year ahead?

4. Who's the sexiest Spice Girl? Or, if you're a bird, who's the sexiest out of that Boyzone lot?

5. Finally, sum up 1996 in three words of your choosing.

SECTION 4

WHO THE HELL ARE YOU LOT ANYWAY?

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Age: _____

Sex: _____

First New Year's resolution to be broken: _____

Thanks. Y'all take care now.

☐ Tick here if you don't want to receive promotional material from other companies

Game Title **Legacy of Kain**

Software House **BMG** People with a Vampire phobia should quickly flick the page – the

The Ghost Of Kain



By Andy Sharp

CRYSTAL DYNAMICS, THE DEVELOPER BEHIND the average Gex and recent platform phenomena Pandemonium, has loosened those platform shackles and is set to unleash its gory vampire adventure. If the preview copy is anything to go by, this could be a game to rival the graphical excellence of Pandemonium. It will be no surprise to learn you take control of Kain. He is the youngest son of an aristocratic family who were killed by a band of brigands. Once in hell he is given the opportunity for revenge by the Necromancer Mortanius – he accepts. Back on Earth Kain discovers he's changed – water burns and sunlight weakens him. After taking revenge on the bandits, he realises his hunger for blood. After a feast of fresh blood from the bandits, Kain vows not to spend eternity as a vampire. To free himself of the curse he must break the Circle responsible for slaying Arial, the Pillar Of Balance. This murder snowballed into the demise of Nosgoth as a battle for dominance ensued. This is his, and your, only hope of ending eternal life.

All this background information should give you a slight inkling as to the dark and dingy nature of this adventure. Along the way you will collect spells, slay over 170 different enemies and explore over 100,000 screens crammed with vital clues and puzzles to solve, on top of everything else.

It will take a while before you can discover which spells and/or attacks work best on which enemies. At some stages the spells will allow you to morph into a bat, wolf or mist to progress through the stages. Some careful strategy and plenty of patience will be rewarded if you re-enter previous lands with new powers.

It is surprising just how much you will find still to discover in these places.

If you think you're up to the challenge of this monster adventure, look out for the full review in the coming months. If, on the other hand, you're afraid of the dark, sort it out or you'll miss one of the largest games yet for the PlayStation

Release Date: March

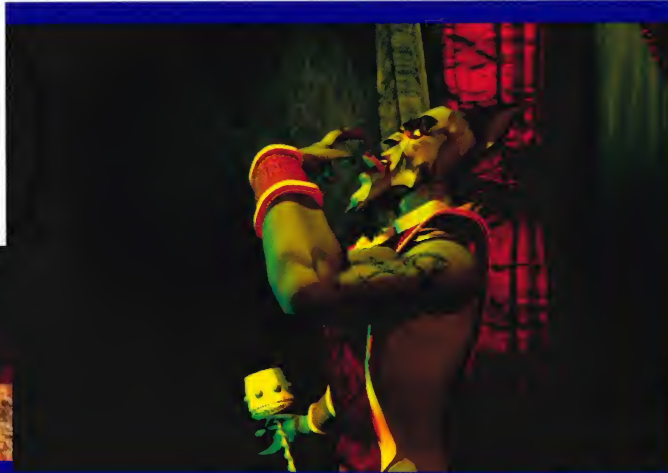


The vast world in which Kain must do his battles is a varied affair – he must be on his toes at all times. His best work will be done under the cover of night, so stronger enemies should be tackled at these times to reduce the chances of failure

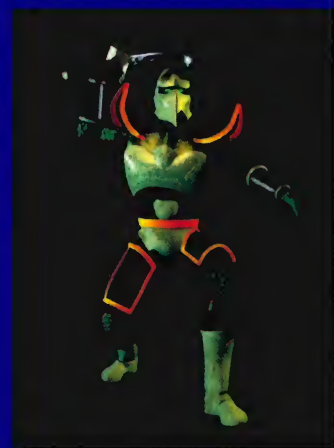


darkest realms of Nosgoth will terrify those with weak stomachs

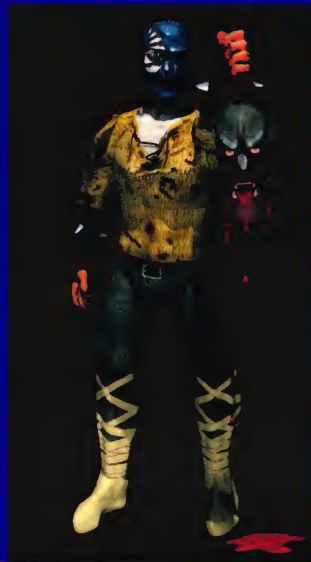
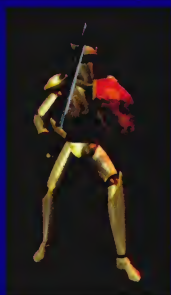
In the age old tradition of adventure games, you may have to interact with other characters or simply blend into the surroundings if you fancy being ignored. This will be important from time to time if you are to survive



There are 21 eldritch objects and spells in total. Choose the correct combination of armour and weapons and you can discover some pretty lethal cocktails which will come in handy from time to time if used correctly



When Legacy Of Kain is finally released in March, you will be able to see the fruits of Crystal Dynamics' hard work for yourself. It is definitely going cause more than the odd headache as you give it your all to free Kain from his nightmare



Game Title **Swagman**

Software House **Core Design** *Be careful you people who sit around dreaming all day,*

Core it's a Swagman

By Peter Proudlove

WITH THE EXCELLENT SUCCESS OF TOMB RAIDER

Core Design is on a roll. It has one or two more tricks up its sleeve, one of which is a Zelda approach to a game called *The Swagman*. It is viewed through a 3-D overhead perspective and split into two main areas – The Real World and The Nightmare Dreamland of the Territories which is accessed through mirror-warps. You play an 8-year-old called Zack and his twin sister Hannah. Their objective – to discover the whereabouts of the Dreamfly and the 10 members of her Dreamflight, and to rescue them from the evil clutches of the Swagman and his terrifying Night Terrors.

To make the journey more difficult, the Swagman has stolen the twins' most treasured possessions and hidden them throughout the Real World. When they find these items they will be able to swap and use them to solve puzzles. An on-screen inventory shows all the items collected, including Zack's bug collection, the Fantastic Frisbee, Super Sneakers, Dreamcharged Flashlight and Cherry Bombs.

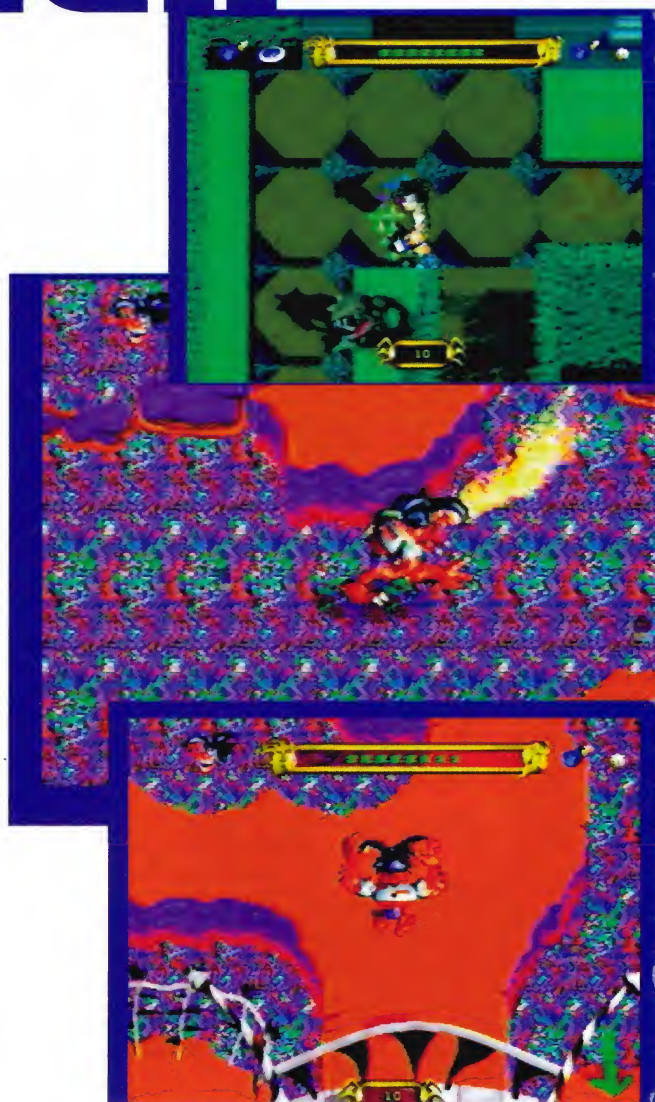
There are also baddies to be disposed of in the form of Green Scallywags, Red Scallywags and Pumpskins.

Zack (the hero) cute and cool can transform into a powerful Dreambeast whenever he goes through a mirror warp into the Territories. Although Hannah may look as sweet as pie, underneath lies her dream persona, into which she also transforms when she is going through one of the warps.

To help them in their quest, Zack and Hannah have a Dream Life guardian angel, The Scarab – a magical entity who helps at key points in the adventure. The Scarab has the ability to control the bug collection into guiding Zack or Hannah through the perilous trap room before each end of zone boss. The trap room is made from a tiled floor – some tiles are safe while others are booby trapped and will crumble away when stepped upon.

The game is only 70 per cent finished but when complete will contain 16 locations spread over nine levels – it seems it's going to be a pretty large challenge with lots of fun and frolics in the Dreamworld. It has the look and style which cannot fail to stand out among other Playstation games.

Release Date: March



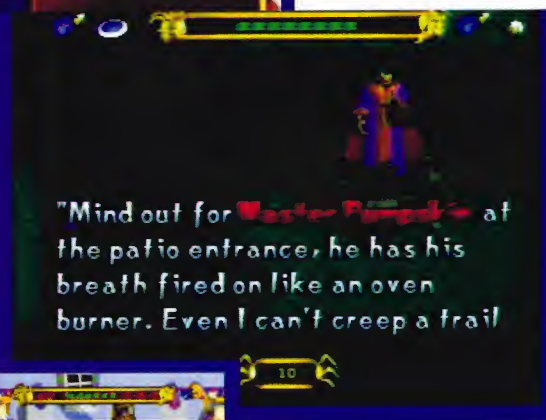
Once upon a time in the land beyond sleep, the Swagman Prince of Nightmares, King of the Dark, went creep, creep, creeping out of his Swaghouse on legs made of candy. He crept through the dark, through the desert, through the shadows twixt sleep and awake, and into the nightrooms of children who lay snug and warm in their beds

the Swagman is out there and he's coming to get YA!!!!

And the Terrors came out of their slumber, from the places they slept in the day and danced, sang and made mischief, while the Swagman went creeping away into nightrooms, with his licorice legs, whispers, fingers of ice, his horrid banana moon smile and his breath of bitter-sweet spice



The inventory shows all the Special Things collected. When Zack/Hannah have passed through a Mirror Warp into the Territories and transformed into the Dreambeasts, they will no longer be able to use the ones they have collected. Instead, from the inventory they will be able to access special Bad Breath Attack Modes



Zack/Hannah have a selection of Special Things (weapons) such as a Zack's Dreamcharged Flashlight - his main weapon in the Territories, Super Sneakers - finding these will give extra speed and jumping power, Fantastic Frisbee - works like a boomerang and also homes in any terrors on screen. Hannah has a yo-yo and it works the same as Zack's frisbee. She also has a pet which can hunt down holes in certain places, maybe for bonus items or special quest objects. Both characters also have Cherry Bombs



Zack/Hannah when they are the Dreambeasts have an R-Type style Bad Breath Attack. The Dreambeasts breathe in then let out a blast of white hot flame. Zack also has a Big Fist Move which enables the Dreambeast to blast through walls and other objects. Hannah's Dew Whip lashes out at the Terrors



Game Title **Virtual Pool**

Software House **Interplay** Since most sports have already had the life strangled out

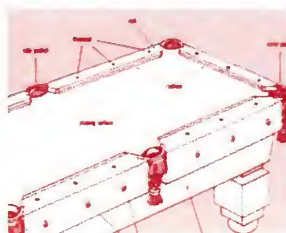
There are many different variations on which game of pool to play - from an obscure scoring game to the standard spots and stripes everyone will already know. Varying a pool game is a tricky business, but this is as varied as it can be under the circumstances



The view can be rotated in any way whatsoever and at any angle - giving an optimum view of the shot at hand. This is why Virtual Pool looks like being the most accomplished pool simulation on any format. Every possible scenario is included so you can vary it to your own preference



The controls have been configured to make things as simple as possible for the player. If you need a reminder at any stage, you can bring up the controls screen to view all the pad combinations you will need to play your desired shot. If you play long enough however, you will soon remember exactly how to put that extra spin on the ball



of them on the PlayStation, it comes as a relief to see something a little bit different

Virtual Swimming



On top of all the other options, there are some movies included which feature ex-pool champion Machine Gun Lou. He runs through some handy pool playing tips and trick shots. Once you've seen MGL have a go you will then get to try your hand – don't be fooled into thinking they're in any way difficult however

By Andy Sharp



Perhaps the most interesting movie is the animated history of pool which attempts to uncover the origins of pool and its development over the centuries. It's hardly an essential part of the game, but is worth a quick browse through if you're in a learning mood. No doubt some of the facts will come in handy on Triv nights

POOL SHOULD NEVER REALLY HAVE BEEN brought out of the smoky pubs and clubs where the game has always maintained its popularity. However, if you don't fancy getting a load of friends together and downing a few scoops or you just can't be bothered picking up a cue, Interplay is soon to bring the next best option to the PlayStation.

Virtual Pool has already, not surprisingly, been released on the PC where it involved hammering the mouse at different speeds for the different power on the shots you play. The idea here is pretty much the same. The pad is used in a combination of holding the X button down and pressing back on the D-pad until you are happy with the distance from cue to ball. Then press forward and the shot is taken.

This adds a greater element of skill for the player and also means it takes a little time to get to grips with. It looks like it's worth the effort and after a few plays it does become a less harrowing prospect. Pool demons will soon be able to pull off those shots only they know how to.

Put simply, Virtual Pool looks like it could be another one of those classic pool games, like the Archer McLean games on the Amiga. The difference is that this is much more realistic and playable – with a full 360 degree panning camera and a tilt so complete you can view shots from under the table. Useless in every way, but it shows all the time and thought that has gone in to make this as complete as it could be.

Another strange choice for Virtual Pool is the music – there are numerous tunes in various different styles. This is presumably intended to lessen the monotony of the ball and cue sounds which are hardly going to change as the game progresses.

When Virtual Pool is released it will no doubt show everyone how it should be done. Nobody should attempt to take it any further – this is as good as it gets. The review will give you an in depth look at what should be the surprise smash of '97.

Game Title **Sentient**

Software House **Psygnosis** *The Liverpool gang's 3-D interactive science fiction disaster*

Save Game



By Dan Whitehead

SENTIENT GOT A PRETTY THOROUGH WORKING over last month, and very tasty it looked too. However, just as there's a world of difference between watching Junior Masterchef and tasting the wares, there's a giant chasm of possibilities between a work in progress and a playable demo. Which is basically a fancy way of saying that we've got our jam-stained paws on the completed first level.

As you'll know by now, Sentient is a first person perspective runaround with one vital difference. Instead of being a bloodthirsty psycho, you're a futuristic medic battling against time as a ferocious sickness eats its way through the crew of an orbiting mining vessel. 2001 meets Outbreak anybody? Now this is a scenario that bodes well. It's unique, it's intriguing and best of all it promises edge-of-the-seat excitement.

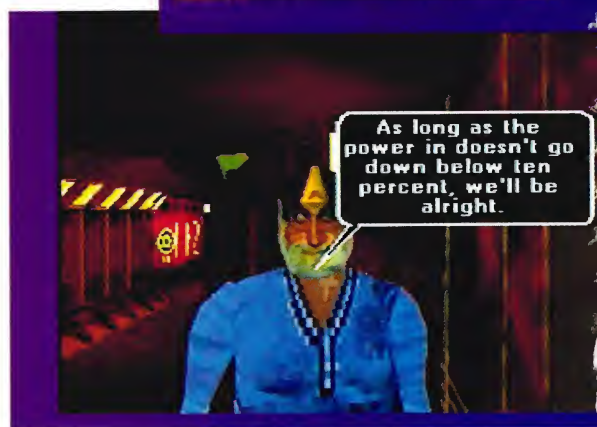
And, if the demo is anything to go by, it should deliver. With only 10 minutes to go before a fatal solar flare hits, and 15 minutes of oxygen left, it's a real panic inducer.

The most entertaining aspect is the presence of 62 other characters, all of whom have their own opinions and moods. Careful negotiation is required to talk them into helping out using a range of chatting options, including flattery and insults. You can even change your facial expression while talking to try and convince people you're sincere. Muff it up and annoy someone and it'll be even harder to convince them later in the game.

It's these bits that are the highlight of the demo, interacting with so many characters with all of them walking about doing their own thing in your absence. This realistic environment leads to multiple plot paths, as each decision you make has a knock on effect of the other characters. As mutiny and destruction loom, every move you make will become vital.

I'm all pert and excited about this game, largely because it's something new and it isn't a 3-D beat'em-up. If the full game matches up to this pre-release demo it should be something rather special.

Release date: March '97



Each character fits into one of four personality types – dominant, submissive, silly or serious. Each type requires a different approach to get them to do your bidding. For instance, a dominant person won't react well to being given a direct order, just as a serious person will want you to get to the point



epic is nearing completion. So here's one final trailer before the main feature

There's skullduggery afoot on the mining ship *Sentient*. The captain's been murdered, the ship's plunging into the sun and the computer, Suzie, keeps receiving cryptic messages. Add radiation sickness killing the crew, mutinous engineers and a rogue assassin stalking the corridors and you've got a massive task ahead

Oh yes. The flare... Good Grief... We've got to get the shields up!!

That should have done it!!

Do you see that power distribution node there? Well, on my word I want you to turn it up to full power.

Garrilac has suffered a bad head injury during that last flare...

The conversation engine has been designed to allow the talking to be as realistic as possible. Thus, there are many different ways to ask the same question depending on who you're talking to. You can even sweet talk them if they're being stubborn, or slag them off if they irritate you

I wish I'd worked with someone like you on my last assignment, Lollie.

I'm about to spoil your day, Jerad, because there's work to do. Could I take a mechanical repair kit?

The other characters get on with their lives regardless of whether you're there or not. And, as a lowly Medical Technician, they don't think of you as anyone special and won't give you help unless you can convince them. This 'mood simulation' should add more depth to an already detailed challenge

Game Title **Mechwarrior 2**

Software House **Activision** *Ever fancied pelting about a future landscape in a kill-crazy*

Mech Your Mind Up Time

By Dan Whitehead

Fast forward to the year 3057 and we find a world torn apart by centuries of senseless scrapping. After the particularly frenzied Battle of Tukayyid, a truce is called and everyone retreats back to their own planets. During this time civil war breaks out between the Jade Clan and the Wolf Clan, each locked in bitter combat with the other, with huge armed robots called BattleMechs as the main weapons.

The pilots of these creations are single minded, fighting for death or glory. As Activision quite rightly points out to us 'war is life and death is the only true peace'.

So it's not a puzzle game then. No, it is, in fact, a futuristic combat simulator. Part Doom, part flight sim and part Manga movie, if you can picture that.

It gives you the chance to pilot no less than 15 different Mechs, with over 20 weapons systems across loads of terrains. It's no surprise that PC owners regularly get hot flushes and cry like girls when you mention it.

The whole game has been rejigged for the console market, to do away with all that tedious keyboard rubbish that PC types enjoy so much. It should give the original a run for it's money thanks to some exclusive new campaigns. You'll even be able to customise the Mech, giving your violent sorties a personal touch. A link up option will also be available so you can battle against or alongside that extra special friend. How much action can you possibly take?

A bit more? OK, how about full-motion video, digitally sampled speech, real-time polygon graphics and a unique viewpoint through a virtual cockpit that recoils from every explosion and missile? Maybe you'd like variables such as gravity and weather to add to the realism? An instant action arcade mode? Check. Long term simulation style Clan campaigns? Oh yes. And I suppose you'll be wanting some sort of training mission section where you can hone your killing prowess without the worry of personal harm. Well, you'll find one of those as well. Basically all the features that made the original so darn special will be here, or so Activision promise us.

Let's face it, if the PlayStation version is anywhere near as good as the legendary PC release this should be massive.

We'll find out soon enough.

Release Date: February '97



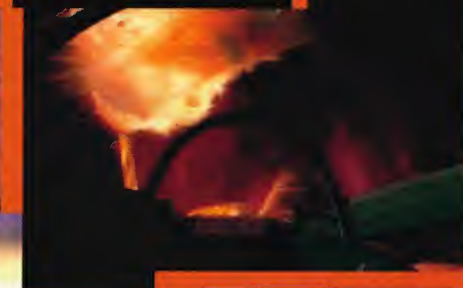
The PC version has won so many awards that Activision actually had to rent out an entire warehouse to keep them all in. It's guarded by a Haitian karate expert called Ku, who Activision hypnotised to dress up in a mock-Mech battle suit. If any other software house goes near it, they're blown to pieces. And that's a true story

giant robot? This PC conversion might just tickle your diodes

Once you pledge allegiance to a Clan, you can rise through the ranks via arena combat. The higher you go, the more respect you earn and the Mechs you get to play with get bigger and meatier. You're final goal is to become a Khan or leader of the Clan



There's a whole story behind the Mechwarrior scenario, dealing with cosmic battles and the invasion of Terran space. Should you become a Clan leader you are allowed to lead the attack to regain Terra and finally restore peace to the Inner Sphere. Wherever that is



Posh lighting effects are used throughout the game to make the Mechwarrior world all the more convincing and the addition of an original orchestral score and in-cockpit vocal warnings go together to make the whole thing a real cinematic experience

Game Title **Wreckin Crew, Escalibur**

Software House **Telstar** With these two, Telstar finally looks to have exorcised the

Slashed Tyres

By Andy Sharp

In all the races, there are in-game pick-ups and upgrades – such as nitros, weapons and repair kits – that you'd expect from a highly-charged racing game. Over 100 different road side objects can be interacted with – for example, colliding with a trackside tyre stack will cause the tyres to spill and bounce all over the track

Wreckin Crew

Nothing whatsoever to do with the Meteors' psychobilly album from a decade ago, Wreckin Crew is an arcade style 3-D hot rod racing game that sets out to put the fun back into the genre. Combining stunt driving, combat and a 16-player link-up option, Wreckin Crew gives you the freedom to race around the streets of four crazy worlds without having to think about the likes of gear ratios and wing settings.

The recent glut of 32-bit racing games has tended to lean heavily towards the simulation end of the driving spectrum – take Formula One and Total Drivin' for example – rather than re-inventing the qualities that made classics such as Hard Driving, Power Drift and Mario Kart such playable, long lasting racers.

Wreckin Crew's cars are all a bit odd in their own way.

You can choose a wide range of stylised and customised vehicles, from a 1957 Chevrolet to a battle-damaged Ford pick-up each with its own unique strengths and weaknesses. As well as the regular racing circuits, there are stunt tracks, hidden bonus levels, cup competitions and head-to-head mode. Telstar has also sought inspiration from Psygnosis' Destruction Derby with the 16-player demolition derby contest.

With a hi-resolution graphics engine that Telstar boasts 'gives all the clarity of SVGA' but without the inherent slow down, Wreckin Crew is set to give the Monster Trucks and Hardcore 4x4s of this world a run for their money.

Release Date: March

Following in the hallowed skid marks of the likes of Mario Kart, Top Gear and Need For Speed, Wreckin Crew has the all-important split screen option for a two player game without the need for two games, two PlayStations and two tellies. It also caters for like-minded friends with a link-up option and a multi-player option allowing up to 16 to take part simultaneously



ghost of the awful Onside and Lone Soldier

Telstar has already released Onside – a football management sim, Starfighter 3000 – a space shoot'em-up, Lone Soldier – a behind-the-commando blaster and Davis Cup Tennis. All the aforementioned received mixed reviews, although with Excalibur 2555 AD and Wreckin Crew, the Surrey-based publisher could be in for an altogether better 1997



Excalibur 2555 AD

One of the most exploited movie topics over the years has been the Arthurian legend of Excalibur. Rather than try to introduce the famous olde worlde myth to a bunch of fable illiterates like us PlayStation gamers, Telstar has re-invented Excalibur for the 21st century.

In a plot that brazenly defies any logic, the legendary sword of Excalibur has been stolen by raiders from the future. Wouldn't you have thought they'd have better things to do? And only one person has the ability avert the catastrophic chain of events that will occur if the sword is not recovered – guess who? You.

Taking on the role of Merlin's humble apprentice, you are sent into the future equipped only with a trusty broadsword (Excalibur perhaps?) and limited spellcasting ability. Will you fight your way through the multiple levels of Salto City or err on the side of caution and attempt to talk your way out of the tricky situations you'll inevitably find yourself in? Communicating with the locals may prove useful sometimes as information has a lower price than you first may think.

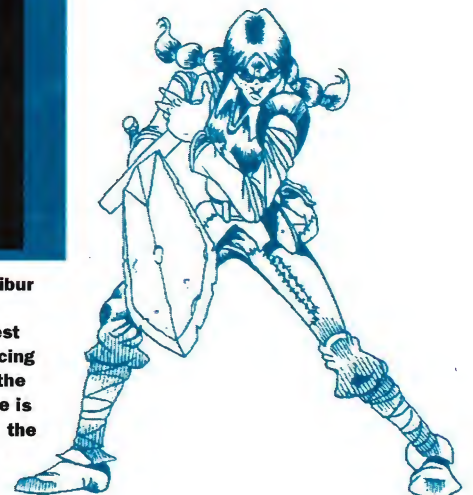
With a true 3-D engine that allows for an unsurpassed (so Telstar would have us believe) feeling of freedom, Excalibur 2555 AD places you in a fantasy world inhabited by Orc peasants, Elysians and Fabian freedom fighters to name but a few. Some of the people you will meet will be more than willing to trade information on Excalibur, but others may require your services as payment.

The question is, will you allow yourself to become involved in a corrupt terrorist plan to take over the city? It's completely up to you.

Release Date: March

Rather than Excalibur 2555 being a straightforward breeze around and kill everyone who crosses your path with your bare hands number, there's hand to hand combat, armed combat and the more subtle spell casting. Moreover, there's a number of intriguing puzzles for you to set your mind to

There are over 600 locations in Excalibur 2555 as well as over 80 different characters. Development team Tempest has used the PlayStation's light sourcing to full effect, dramatically to create the feeling of actually 'being there'. There is speech throughout the game, with all the characters being fully lip-synched – a potentially impressive USP



Market Traders: P6633T. Just in case you haven't found it, there is a secret passage in the tunnel area.

Game Title **Crusader: No Remorse**

Software House **Electronic Arts** *Futuristic shoot'em-up strategy games are coming in*



Your arsenal can be improved by picking up credits from the dead WEC members and trading in the shop for a new upgrade. As well as this there are numerous pick ups you can collect to obtain extra ammo as well as weapons. The Spider Bomb is a handy extra to have which will scutter into a room before exploding and hopefully take out enemy strongholds



There are many environments to battle through from refineries, military bases, offices and a trip up to a space station. An aspect which is pretty impressive is that everything you can see can be shot at and be left damaged or destroyed



thick and fast. EA's latest is the next in the very long line of PC conversions



Lone Man Crusade

By Andy Sharp

ELECTRONIC ARTS HAS NEVER BEEN one to rest between releases over the past year and the year ahead looks like carrying on with this trend. Just one of the handful to be released in the first quarter of '97 is Crusader which is a futuristic strategy cum shoot'em-up in much the same vein as Steel Harbinger and Loaded.

You are unsurprisingly outnumbered by the World Economic Consortium who are frankly up to no good. You are a part of the wildly undermanned global Resistance who are to put a stop to WEC and their dealings.

All this means inevitably that you must single handedly blast everything which comes into your path and blow up tons of other stuff along the way.

Viewed from a 3-D isometric vantage point it's hardly going to tear the barriers down and lead the way for others but for what it offers it easily strides beyond Steel Harbinger and could be one of the essential buys in its field.

As with many EA releases this has been converted from the PC and it will come as no surprise to learn that an element of strategy will be required. Don't be put off by this however, as a majority of the game involves blasting everything within range.

Controlling your character isn't a problem at any times as although there are many moves he can make other than a straightforward walk or fire of his weapon the combinations to pull of a roll are easily mastered. You will need to master these as most of the moves will be needed to either attack or avoid enemies in equal measures.

Once the gameplay has been fine tuned this will get the full review treatment. At this stage it's looking promising in every department. The full review will reveal all in the fullness of time but if the PC reviews are anything to go by, this could be a firm contender to be a classic.

Release Date: February

As you wander through the many corridors and rooms you won't know what's in store ahead if you haven't already been there. Unexplored sections only appear as you step into them, otherwise they remain darkened at all times. For this reason you will need to be prepared for any occurrence in a new area

Cheat, Drink and be Merry

It's a New Year and that means new games for one and all. But that isn't always good news. Over the festive period, we've been listening in on your conversations and it's the same old topic, all across the world.

"I'm still rubbish at games and I sob myself to sleep every night" is the refrain echoing from every chimney. "I wish the fantastic PlayStation Pro would print some codes and cheats for loads of new games", we hear you whisper. And we hear your prayers. And, praise be, we act upon them

TOMB RAIDER

You've had a big fat complete guide. You've been taken by the hand and shown all the secrets. And that's still not enough is it, you dirty great softies? I suppose you'll want the one thing that will make your tomb raiding even easier? All the weapons and unlimited ammo it is then. Go to your inventory and press **L1**, **▲**, **R2**, **L2**, **L2**, **R2**, **●** and finally **L1** or **L2**. Now let that be the end of it.

BLACK DAWN

Is your chopper weak? In a gaming sense, obviously. Well, you can either apply a dubious cream from a Dutch mail order catalogue or rub these cheats into your limp games playing. Don't forget each of these cheats requires you to pause the game and enter **Select/L2/Select/R2** before chanting the code.
Max Fuel & Ammo - **▲ ▲ ▲ ●**
Cycle Gun Modes - **Select/**

Select/Select
Screen Mode Toggle - **↓ R1/R2**
Max Weapons - **L1/L2/R1/R2**
Summon Wingman - **■ ■ ■ ●**
Mission Complete - **▲ ▲ ▲**
↓ ↓ ↓
Upgrade Current Weapon - **L1/L1/R1/R1**

CASPER

He's a friendly ghost, you know. Like a beautiful, smiling,

transparent marshmallow. Thus, when it comes to duffing up evil ghosts, he's a bit useless. You, sitting there in gallons of your own sweat, must help him.

Here's how you beat those beastly, bullying ghosts:

1. Fatso near kitchen (feed him hamburgers)
2. Stinky (spray perfume on him)
3. Stretch (use glue)
4. Fatso in bathtub (use camera)
5. General Fatso (use wind up toy then hammer the tanks)
6. Farmer Stinky (use hammer and chisel to carve the stone in Casper's image)
7. Graveyard Stretch (use twister morph to lure him into grave dig site)

SOUP OF THE DAY CREAM OF PANDEMONIUM

It's a right little minx of a game this and no mistake. It's also fairly hard in places, and some points are more frustrating than a luscious cream cake placed tantalisingly out of reach. Lucky for you then, that we've hunted down these cheat codes that should help you through the trickier stages. Enter them on the password screen for the desired effect.
TWISTEYE: With this cheat you can hold **L1** and **L2** and move the D-pad left or right to rotate the screen. Press down to

center it again.
THETHING: Hold **L2** during the game and press **Circle** to change into any of the animal morphs at any time. You actually bend into bizarre shapes, but the thought's there. **L2** and **X** changes you back to normal.
HARDBODY: Fairly simple. This makes you utterly invincible.
BODYSWAP: Press **Triangle** to swap between Fergus and Nikki halfway through a level, rather than at the end.
OTTOFIRE: Never lose your

weapon. Weapons can still be changed by picking them up though.
VITAMINS: It'll say **31** lives, but they're actually infinite. So you need never ever die.
CORONARY: Loads of extra energy hearts.
BORNFREE: Skip to any level in the game, like Elsa the platform game playing lion.
TOMMYBOY: Finish a level and you get the option to play a secret pinball game.
CASHDASH: Brings up a bonus stage at the end of a level.

FI

A whole caboodle of secret biscuity chunks are hiding in this game, like cookie dough in posh ice cream. Here are some to get your teeth into. To get extra tracks and to allow you to enter the other cheats, do this button-dance: Go to the options screen where you choose from Practice, Qualify or Race. Press and hold **Select** while quickly pressing **● ● ▲ ▲ ● ↑ →**. Done

that? Good. Now you can do these:

To race in 4x4 trucks press and hold **Select** while quickly pressing **→ ↑ ▲ ← ↑ ■ ▲**.

To zip about on some motorbikes press and hold **Select** while quickly pressing **↓ ↑ ● ▲ → ↑ ■ ▲**.

To race on an exciting sounding lava track press and hold **Select** while quickly pressing **■ ● ↑ → → ● X**.

And to make Murray Walker go quite alarmingly mental press and hold **Select** while quickly pressing **← ● ↑ ↓ ↓ → ● ■ ■**.

IMPACT RACING

I'd like you to meet my friend, Boffy. He's a magic kangaroo. Everyday, he squeezes cheats from his special code-nipples into his pouch for me to find. Today, he's lactated some password codes for this fast car type game. Come, drink them with me.

Invincibility - I.M.IMMORTAL
Infinite Weapons - LOADSOFTUFF
All Weapons - ALL.TOOLEDUP
6 Bonus Tracks - BONUS.LEVELS
Final Level - ENDGAMELEVEL
Level Select - RABBITBADGER
Trippy Music - JOURNEYS.END

MADDEN '97

American football fans are usually rather tedious people, obsessed with statistics and suchlike. It is they who will bellow like ecstatic geese when they find the hidden teams of yesteryear in the latest 'Old American Commentator' themed sport-o-rama. Do this: At the user ID screen, enter the name **Tiburón** and go back to the Team Select screen. The All Madden team, the All '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s, and Tiburón teams will appear. And they want you to play with them. Will you, sir?

SOVIET STRIKE

Last month we showed you where to find loads of secret goodies, like Santa Claus and a great toilet joke. Since then we've had quite a few people begging us for level codes. Unfortunately, we'd lost them and so made them up when people asked. Sorry about that. Here are the proper ones, which were on the floor behind a Ribena carton.

Level One - WORSTCASE
Level Two - GRANDTHEFT
Level Three - GROZNEY
Level Four - CHERNOBYL
Level Five - CIVILWAR

POWERMOVE PRO WRESTLING

Sometimes, 12 wrestlers just aren't enough. At a dinner party, for instance, when you have 14 chairs. What can you do to conjure two more beefy men out of thin air? You do this, crazy horse. Go to the title screen and enter the following codes. You'll know they work when you hear a sound beckoning you from the speaker. If you don't hear that, you've cocked up. Or we have, not that we'd ever admit it. The codes are thus: **● → ▲ ↑ ■ ← X ↓ X ↓ ■ ← ▲ ↑ ● → Select**. Highlight Commandant and press **Select**. You'll have a new fighter called **Sparrow**. The second hidden character is summoned forth by pressing **↑ ↓ ← → ▲ X ■ ● L1, R1, L2, R2, Select**. Now highlight the character **El Temblor** and press **Select**. This let's you play as **Sallie**, the referee.

SYNDICATE WARS

A cheat already! And it's not even out yet! So, to be honest, this might be complete and utter lies. It's floating about the Internet though, so you might as well keep hold of it just in case it's true. Then we can boast that we had the cheat first. To get all the weapons enter **↑ ↑ ↓ ↓ ← → X ●** during the intro. You will hear a gunshot if you entered it correctly. Hopefully.

TOBAL NO. 1

The clown faced robot of death, we choose to call Hom, is a real bast to finish. He's got an unstoppable combo, you see, and it hurts. Well the worm will be laughing on the other side of his face when he turns. Or something. Anyway, to make Hom shut himself down press **↓ R1/L1** during a fight. That'll teach the second rate Metal Mickey impersonator to mess with me. I am the God of Hellfire, I am.

TOKYO HIGHWAY BATTLE

Games aren't like real life, you know. In real life, doing your car up means trips to Kwik Fit and Halfords and big damage to the credit card. In the world of games, particularly this one, you can hold **L1/L2/R1 ↓** and **Start** at the Title Screen until the Venue Screen appears. Then you can enter the Speed Shop and

have a Supermarket Sweep trolley dash to pump your vehicle up. For nowt pence, you stingy tinkers.

TWISTED METAL 2

Hidden characters and semi-nude national monuments await you in this sequel. To play as Minion you'll have to press **L1 ↑ ↓ ←** at the character select screen. For the same effect, but with the mysterious Sweet Tooth unlocked, press **↑ L1 ▲ →** at the same screen.

And, hankies ready, to see the Statue of Liberty in a bikini you'll have to reach the New York Big Leap stage. Shoot the Statue of Liberty until the torch lights up and then shoot it until it explodes. You will see her in a bikini for your trouble. She's French, you know.

ADIDAS POWER SOCCER

Just a few minor gifts here. In Arcade Mode on the Commentator option, press **●** and **■** to hear a nice woman's voice. Cheers, that was worth the effort. If you want a useful cheat then you'll have to press **L2/R2 ■** and **X** on the Options screen and you'll have a Dream Team. Yes you will.

BATMAN FOREVER

Would you believe that this is Kula Shaker's favourite game? I think that says it all. So I do hope you haven't bought this. But if you have, having gone against our divine orders, then hold down **X ● L2 →** on the second controller. It lets you be any of the villains with Batman's powers. Now, wasn't that worth £45?

IRON & BLOOD

It's a 3-D beat'em-up, so therefore there have to be secret characters. And, shazam! There bloody well are. Do these codes on the character select screen, for added beardy thrills.

Lord of Chaos: ↑ ↓ ↑ ← →

▲ X

Minion of Chaos: L1/L2/R1/R2 ↑ X (all at the same time)

Minion of Order: ← and **■ →** and **●**

Strahd: ↑ ↘ ← R1/R2/L2/L1

PROJECT OVERKILL

This one's been in the shops for

months now and we've still to receive a review copy. Hmmm. Couldn't be because it's absolutely toss? Nah. Must be some sort of localised temporal displacement sending all copies bound for reviewers into some weird parallel dimension.

Anyway, if you've bought this blindly, without our advice, you really should know one thing. You can restore your health at any time by pausing the game and doing the following: Highlight 'Review Mission'. Press and hold **■**. Then press (in this order, while holding square) **● X ▲**. Press and hold **●**. Press (in same fashion) **■ X ▲**. Your health will race up to a perky 200 or more, depending on your level of play. You'll know it's worked because the word 'Cheater!' appears on the screen in a vain attempt to make you feel inadequate.

THE ADVENTURES OF LOMAX

I invented a potion once and when I drank it I fell into my TV and met the Lemmings. Honest, I did. They spoke to me with lilting Devonshire accents and told me that they'd always dreamed of being in a platform game. Naturally, when I awoke I assumed it was all a hallucination. But the release of this Lem platformer has made me wonder. Maybe it really happened after all. Anyway, to skip levels simply press **↓ Start ↑** (press and hold) **L1** (press and hold) **▲ ● X ■**. A number should have appeared to the left of Lomax. Now to skip a level press and hold **↑ L1**. Select and Start

MORTAL KOMBAT TRILOGY

Sad people probably haven't slept for months since they found out there's yet another secret character in this money for old rope rehash. Anyway, to stop you ringing us up and hassling us for the code, here it is. Pick one of the Ninjas (e.g. SubZero or Scorpion). Before the round starts, if you're player one hold **← ■ ▲ R1/R2**. If you are player 2 hold **→ ■ ▲ R1/R2**. If you have performed the code correctly your character will change into Chameleon. Now you have the ability to blend in with foliage and sand, and spin your eyes through 360 degrees. Or is that the reptile?

The complete guide to Crash Bandicoot



ISLAND ONE

This first island is here to allow you to get to grips with controlling Crash and to help you get to know his numerous enemies. On this first of the three islands, there are three clear Gem opportunities hidden in the Boulders and Hog Wild levels, as well as the very first level, N.Sanlty Beach. We'll walk you through all these rare Gem moments, plus the rest of the Island's levels. While completing the first Island will seem pretty straight forward to most of you, the fact remains that to achieve 'perfects' on all the levels means you'll have to complete Islands Two and Three, collect all the relevant Gems from those islands and then come back here and do it all again. Right, here we go then...

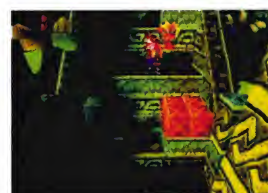
N.SANITY BEACH



I'll take it as read that you know what each of the different crates contains and how to go about getting what's inside 'em, so most of this first level is pretty simple. You wake up on the beach, grab the crates and pick up the fruit and the extra life.

Proceed through the level avoiding the ever-so-slow crab and the small pit until you come to the mask crate on the left. Pick up the mask and carry on. The next crate you'll encounter has a large arrow on it.

These, as you know, give you access to crates suspended in mid-air and this one is no different. There is a 10 fruit prize waiting above the arrow crate. Get it and carry on.



Now you get to the crate-littered staircase. Collect the contents of each crate (there's an extra life in one of 'em and another mask) and ignore the metal box. When you're at the top of the stairs you'll see a checkpoint. Hit it. Carry on and you'll come across another mask crate, bringing your current total to three.

Now you can run forward hitting any object you please without getting damaged for about 20 seconds. The contents of all crates you come in contact with during your mad dash will automatically be collected, so don't worry about picking everything up.

When you come to the small wall, pick up the crate hiding just behind it, to the right, and jump over the pit and up to the high wall of crates. Open all the crates and carry on until you get to the fork in the path.



Here you must take the left path first – watch out for the turtle – and walk right the way along it. Once you've reached the two crates and opened them, turn around and head back the way you came, right up to the fork in the path. Take the right hand path and continue along it, avoiding the pit. Hit the box marked '!' and the white box outlines that span across the sizeable pit in front of you will now transform into solid crates. So far so good.



Now the choice is yours, you can either walk straight across the crates, jump over the final pit, collect the final crate and jump into the teleporter OR try and achieve a 'perfect' by smashing every crate across the big pit. This is somewhat tricky though.

The best tactic is to stand on the first one, jump up and slightly tap the D pad, making you hop forward onto the next crate. Of course, when you land on the next crate, it'll smash. So you've got to be quick and swiftly hop your way across all the 10 crates. Do it too slow and you'll fall off, but do it too quickly and you'll end up missing crates, quashing your 'perfect' attempt. If you do manage it though, you'll be rewarded with the first of the clear Gems and will have now completed 1 per cent.

Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: None

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: None

JUNGLE ROLLERS

Here you'll encounter your very first TNT crate. Don't spin into it at any cost! You'll die instantly. Instead, collect the mask crate and carry on through the level spinning into any skunks that get in your way. Now you'll get to the first of the jungle rollers which you must avoid.



Wait until it rolls away from the middle of the wall and then jump across into safety. A technique that requires little brain power. Collect the Tawna token on the other side of the wall and then run up to the huge Venus flytrap. Don't get too close, but try and jump and spin mid-air into its head. This gets rid of these annoyances fairly swiftly.

Avoid the pits and watch out for the next two rollers, while not forgetting the mask crate in between the pair. Proceed past

the next two rollers and spin through the checkpoint crate ahead. You'll probably notice a green Gem floating near here. It's telling you there is a secret area above it, but as you haven't got the green Gem yet, you can't go up there, or get a 'perfect' on this level. Yet.



Past the checkpoint lies a couple of extra lives and a handful of rollers and further up ahead there's another Tawna token to grab. You'll then see another extra life stuck between two TNT crates which you should only attempt to get if you have got a mask handy. If you haven't got the mask, ignore it and carry on ahead, collecting the four crates of fruit and the other extra life.



Next up is another Tawna token, which when collected, will whisk you off to the Bonus Round. This round is so easy. Simply move to the right, destroying the crates as you go and jump over the final gap into Tawna's loving arms. If you managed a 'perfect' on the first level, you will now be 3 per cent complete and can save the game on your memory card (if you have one).



After that's done, it's back to jungle rollers for you. You'll reappear on the spot where you picked up the third Tawna token. Collect the extra life crate and move on up to the double wheeled roller. Now this has pits each side of it, so you have to time the jump so you land in the middle of the wall and then leap off the other side, over the pit and back onto the path. Now it's a straight run to the teleporter, but remember, you have to return

once you manage to get hold of the green Gem. That's if you want to get that 'perfect' of course.

Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: Green

THE GREAT GATE



Open the crates at the start of the level and use the arrow crates to jump skywards and onto the ledge above (holding down the jump button will give you greater height in your jumps by the way). Now you're on the ledge, the only way you can fall off is to go down the gaps between them.

Be careful! Use the next arrow crate to pick up the floating Tawna token and leap through the gap as the metal box bounces into the air. If you want an extra life here, hop onto the metal box and it'll take you to one just off screen.

The next obstacle is the monkey. Spin into him when he's beating his chest and then carry on to the right, collecting the extra life at the top of the two crate steps as you go.



When you're at the far right of the level, you'll see a small ledge and three vertical logs. Spin into these and they'll eventually land horizontally, allowing you to jump onto the ledge, then onto the three logs and off onto the next ledge on the left. Now use the arrow crates once more to jump further up the screen, collecting the fruit as you go, until you reach the next ledge complete with checkpoint.

From there, go left and hop onto the turtle's back, making it well and truly dead. Instead of disappearing, it'll flip over onto its shell. This allows you to jump off its back and grab the mask crate hovering above it. Continue left, get rid of the Venus flytraps

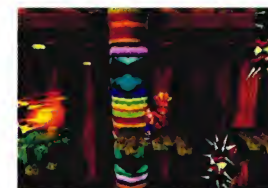
en route and jump over the thrusting spike before you. These shudder before popping up (or down) so take your time and wait for the right signal to move on. Get past the next few spiky poles and you'll find another Tawna token. Pick it up.



Next up is an angry native, complete with huge wooden shield. Hop on its head and the shield will stay head up, allowing you to spin him off the ledge. If you don't do this correctly, he'll shove you off the ledge to your death, so concentrate hard before you make your attack!

After him, just carry on to the left, across the slimy ledges, pick up the extra life and stop when you get to the fire ledge. A small flame will pop up just before the thing is about to ignite fully, so as soon as the bigger flame dies down, make your move.

Avoid the next couple of poles and you'll find your third Tawna token. Bonus Round time again! Same as before really, except on this one you have to watch out for TNT crates and make damn sure you hit the 'I' crate mid-level. This will activate a bridge (just like the one on the first level) and let you get to Tawna and the two extra lives waiting at the far right of the level. Now you've completed a whole 7 per cent of the game. Well done.



After you have reappeared from the Bonus Round, it's only a small leap into the teleporter. You'll notice the small yellow Gems floating around the teleporter, but as you haven't found the yellow Gem yet, you can't go near 'em. Also, you can't get a 'perfect' score on this level either. Never mind, there's plenty of time to return after you've bagged that yellow Gem.

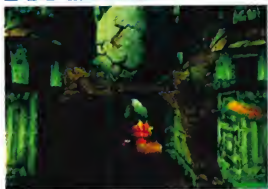
Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: Yellow

BOULDERS

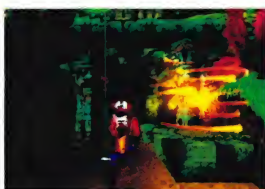


Indiana Jones style boulder japes are in store here as you run down the screen, but be sure the massive rock behind you doesn't catch up. Simply run for your life, hop over the two small pits and run some more until you're inside the tunnel. Collect all the crates in there and carry on running, hopping over the five smaller pits and the even smaller wooden fences en route. Try to get the two crates on the left and then right of the path as you're running and get into the next tunnel quickly.

Hit the checkpoint and run straight through the tunnel, where the third and final boulder is waiting for you. There is a series of massive pits ahead, but thankfully there are also a load of stepping stones too. Run and jump, run and jump – that's the key here – and keep on running once you're over the pit.



Now swerve around the on coming poles, following the winding trail of fruit as you go and try to collect the two crates that lie on the left and then the right of the path. Jump up and spin into them whilst running. After that, another series of stepping stone fun awaits and then you're home and dry at the friendly teleporter. Phew! Get a 'perfect' score here and you'll get a second clear Gem for your trouble and by my calculations you should now be about 9 per cent done. Calm down though, there's a lot more to come.

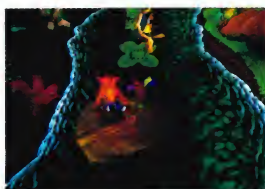


Checkpoints: 1
Bonus Rounds: None
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

UPSTREAM

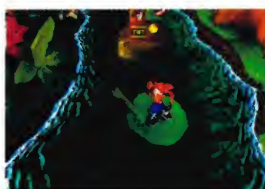
A semi-overhead playing angle comes into play on this level, so as you start, make sure you walk downwards and pick up the mask crate before you set off upstream. Most things on this level will either damage you or sink if you stay on them for too long, so move fast and collect everything you come across on your way.

Hop off the log and onto the lily pad, then off that onto the tree stump. Wait for the golden fish to leap out of the water and once it has, leap onto the next lily pad and onto the next moss-covered ledge.



A leaf will float up to the ledge and if you get on it, it'll take you further upstream. Do so and continue across the next few ledges as you did before. Venus flytraps lie in waiting for you with their mouths wide open. A quick leap in and out will avoid any damage, but don't hang around inside whatever you do!

Continue along the stream, not forgetting the crates on the way until you get to a blue flytrap. These open and shut their jaws at intervals, so wait for it to start opening and then leap in and back out onto the next ledge.



Continue along the level using all the leaves/lily pads/ledges as before and avoid all the flowers as instructed. Yellow Gems flicker in the distance, but you don't have that Gem yet, so you'll have to ignore 'em once again. You'll pass through a checkpoint and then a Tawna token, thus bringing your Tawna token total to a maximum three.



Yep, it's bonus time again. As before, move to the right, hop on the boxes and don't fall down the gaps. Two extra lives are waiting for you with Tawna and if you manage to get there, the game will now be 13 per cent complete.

Back on the waterfront you've another leaf ride to go on, a few more blue flowers to avoid and then the teleporter and some more yellow Gems come into view. As mentioned earlier, you don't have the Gems yet, so you'll have to come back at a later date. Bugger. Never mind, get in the teleporter and hit the next level.

Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: Yellow

PAPU PAPU

Big fat Papu is the first of the boss characters you have to beat and by far the easiest. What you have to do is get in his chair and stay there as he dances around, wiggling his huge staff.



When he swings it round in an attempt to hit you, get ready for action because the moment he hits the floor with it, you need to leap onto the back of his head. Do this three times and he's outta there, as are you, onto the next level.



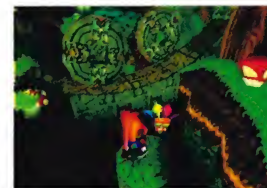
ROLLING STONES

This level is fairly similar to the earlier Jungle Rollers one, except this time the pits are slightly wider. More often than not you'll find them lurking on both sides of the walls, so be careful with those leaps! Start the level, collect the Tawna token, get over the walls past the wheels and up onto the arrow crate where you'll find the first N.Brio token hiding above it. Collect it.



A checkpoint follows, as does a pit, a wall and a bunch of TNT crates mixed in with a load of normal ones. Take your time and collect all the boxes without setting off the TNT crates. You'll gain another N.Brio token.

Hit the next checkpoint and onto the stepping stone moving sideways inside the next pit and then onto the wall, past the wheels and over the next pit onto the other side. Now you have to jump onto the moving ledge, onto a wall and then onto another moving ledge which can be quite tricky. If you survive that, there'll be a second Tawna token close by and a mask crate further up the level.



Next you have to jump onto another pit ledge and onto the wall between the two moving wheels and off the other side. Easier said than done. Once you've got through that lot though, there's a third Tawna token sitting waiting.

Another trip to the Bonus Round follows. Same rules as before apply, just get across to the right and although there are no extra lives this time, you're now 15 per cent complete.

Right, back in the main level you'll eventually come across a pit with two blue Gems inside. Yes, fate deals another crushing blow – you can't get near 'em as you don't have the blue Gem yet. No 'perfect', no Gems, come back later. Arse.



Right, the final section of this level requires muchos concentration. You need to jump onto the ledge in the pit that eventually disappears, right back

off it onto the wall ahead, then off onto the next disappearing ledge, onto the wall, then onto the next sideways moving ledge, then onto the wall (while avoiding the wheels) and finally back onto the path. Phew. It's hectic alright, but a series of well timed jumps will see you through. Honest. Once that's done you're on the home straight to the teleporter.



Pause briefly to collect the third and final N.Brio token on the way and you're off to a new Bonus Round where all the crates are transformed into TNT ones, making it bloody difficult to get across in one piece. If you do get across, there is no save point, but there are six extra lives for you. So it's not all that bad. Once you're back in the level again, simply trot forward into the teleporter and you're away.

Checkpoints: 3

Bonus Rounds: Tawna, N.Brio
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: Blue

HOG WILD

Trial and error is the key here, but if you simply can't be arsed with all that, just follow these instructions and you'll be onto the next level in no time. Ahem... Head straight on, jump over the three pits and through the checkpoint crate.

Now jump over the two spiky poles, go left around the first vertical pole and right around the next one. Jump over the pit, go right around the dancing native, left around the next pole and right around the next. Go left past the native and jump onto the bongo drum. This will throw you forwards and over a large pit.



When you have landed go right around the next dancing native, onto the next bongo drum, over the spiked pole and into the second checkpoint. From here go

right along the two poles, left past the native, right then left past the next two poles, right past the next native and over the rotating pig on a spit.

Head right, then left past the next set of poles, straight underneath the next rotating pig, left past a pole, then right past the next one, over the third rotating pig, over the pole and right around the last native and you're into the teleporter with 17 per cent of the game now completed. Frantic and fun, I'm sure you'll agree. Get someone to shout out these instructions while you're attempting it, it helps loads, believe me.



Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: None
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

NATIVE FORTRESS

This level starts pretty much the same as The Great Gate with those high bouncing arrow crates. Get up to the ledge, bounce on the turtle and swipe the mask that's hovering above it. The next obstacle is a spiky pole which is easily avoided. Leap over the flaming thang and into the checkpoint waiting nearby.



You're now faced with those rotating three log ledges (and a Tawna token). So, do exactly what you learned earlier and make your way up the screen and onto the arrow box on the far right. Once you're on this, it's up and onto the ledge for a checkpoint.



After that there's set of slimy ledges followed by a couple of

small flame obstacles that are easy to get past, until you get to a slightly bigger than normal gap between the ledges. Here you must wait for the flame to go out before you leap onto it and straight off it to the right.

Be careful though, the next ledge has one of those shield bearing natives running about on it. Same procedure as before, only this time try and jump up off his head in order to grab the floating extra life.

Now we're back to those thrusting spiked poles. Watch their tempo and leap across the gaps when you're certain they've retracted – don't worry about hitting your head on them because it's impossible.

Carry on to the right across the slimy ledges and into the three crates, one of them being a checkpoint. Now get rid of the Flytraps with your spin, go under the thrusting pole and onto the ledge that has a TNT crate, a metal box and three other crates sitting on top of each other.

Here you need to jump up, spin into the top crates and leap back to the left onto the slimy ledge, as you will now have set off the TNT detonator.



Wait for it to blow up and then leap back and collect what's left. Go to the far right now, collect another Tawna token and it's Bonus Round time once more. Two extra lives are in mid-air above the first arrow crate, so get them and then move to the right and meet up with Tawna.

There's no extra lives for you here, but you should have three clear Gems now, plus 21 per cent of the game sorted. Back in the main level, you're faced with another bout of the annoying 'three spinning logs' routine. Just like before, make your way upwards and hop onto the arrow crates, collecting fruit as you go.

There is a mask crate floating on the left if you want it and when you finally get to the top of the tree, there is a ledge with the fourth checkpoint sitting on it. Make sure you hit this, as you don't want to be re-doing those logs again. Now move on to the left, bounce onto the turtle's back and then grab the floating fruit crate above.



Once you've done that there's a little 'cheat' available: Simply jump up onto the fence where there's a spike missing and you can then hop over the fence and run left behind a bulk of the level, missing plenty of dangers as you go. A very handy tip I'm sure you'll agree.

When you've gone as far as you can to the left, jump back onto the fence, onto the flame ledge thang (obviously when it's gone out) and then onto the ledge to the left. Keep heading left and you'll soon find the fifth checkpoint as well as another section in the fence allowing you to cheat as before. There's an extra life behind the fence here, so grab it while you can.



There are also some red Gems floating about, but just like all the other times you've seen Gems you can't do anything about it. Come back later.

Now there's even more of the three log spinning delights for you to climb up here, so just take your time and do what you learnt to do earlier, collecting the many fruits and lives on the way.

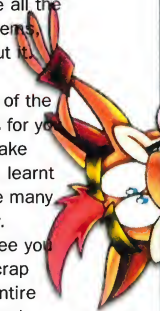
A well timed leap will see you into the teleporter, yet a crap one will see you fall the entire length of the log section and you'll have to start all the annoying 'three spinning logs' business again.

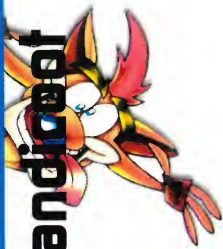
Once all that's done, you've actually finished Island One. Now who's a clever boy then? Right then, let us soldier onwards to the second island...



Checkpoints: 5

Bonus Rounds: Tawna
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: Red





► ISLAND TWO

This island holds many treats for an agile Bandicoot: Two new boss characters (Ripper Roo and Koala Kong), two of the longest levels in the game (Lost City and Sunset Vista) plus the chance for you to collect the first of the six coloured Gems and the two Cortex keys. The keys allow you access to the game's two hidden levels, in case you were wondering. So if you want to complete the game you'll need to get a hold of these babes. Read on...

UP THE CREEK

As you start, collect the mask and the extra life crates and jump across onto the floating leaf before you. Hop onto the next one, then off and continue up the moss covered hill until you reach a solid ledge. Watch out for the jumping fish and then hop off the lily pad and onto the solid ledge.

Another leaf ride waits and once off that and across the blue flytrap, there is a crate with a Tawna token waiting inside. Just after that you'll find a rolling monkey which must be hit when stationary and then it's a small trot to the checkpoint.



Get past the floating leaf, the blue flytrap and the two lily pads, go up the hill and there's an extra life at the top. From here you need to make four jumps in a row to get past the leaves, lily pads and ledges and you will end up facing another monkey.

Spin him off the ledge as before and you're onto the two flytraps. Here you need to wait until the blue one has snapped shut before making your move – attempt to cross the two of them at any other time and you'll die.

Go up the moss covered hill and sprint straight across the long line of lily pads and jump onto the solid ledge. To the left of the ledge is one of those 'I' boxes. Jump onto and straight back off this in order to get all the crates available, but be careful as it's a tricky little leap. Wait until the long line of lily pads you ran across have floated back to the surface of the water and then run back the way you came and down the moss covered hill.



On the left-hand side of the hill you will see a tiny ledge with two crates on it – one arrow crate and a TNT crate. There is also an extra life under the hill if you want it. Our advice is to jump onto the TNT crate (thus starting the detonation countdown) and then swiftly onto the arrow crate and back up the hill. As the TNT crate explodes it'll take the arrow crate with it and therefore you will have collected the two missing crates you need to get your 'perfect'. Well done lad.

Now return to where you hit that 'I' box and make your way across the blue flytrap, past the fish and up to another couple of crates. Your prize for doing so is a second Tawna token and an extra life. Soldier on up stream, across the diagonal path of lily pads and over the green flytrap.

Hop onto the next set of floating leaves and up to the next ledge where you'll get the third Tawna token and be whisked off to the Bonus Round. Here you need (as ever) to make your way to the right of the screen, but then it's slightly different. Use the arrow crate at the start of the level to propel you skywards and hop your way across to Tawna, who'll give you two lives for your trouble.



Back to the main game and there's an extra life waiting to be collected. Pick it up and prepare yourself for the final obstacles. There's a green flytrap followed by a blue flytrap up ahead and a floating leaf which will take you to the teleporter.

Wait until the leaf floats down the screen and as soon as the blue flytrap snaps shut, run like mad across the green flytrap, over the blue one and onto the leaf before it floats off up screen. Timing is essential here, so be sure you can make it before you start to move. Once done, it's a small step into the exit and you've got another

perfect round and you'll discover the game is now 27 per cent complete! Wayhey!



Checkpoints: 2

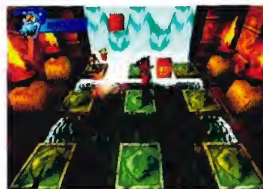
Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: None

RIPPER ROO

The second of the boss characters, Ripper Roo, needs to come in contact with a series of exploding crates in order for you to move onto the next level. As you'll no doubt notice when you start this level, big TNT crates fall down the waterfall at the back of the playing area and proceed to float along the level at intervals. You need to start the detonators on these crates so they will explode when old Ripper Roo is hopping around them. Three well timed hits and he's outta there.



For the first hit you need to position a crate, preferably near the middle platform. Ripper's first hopping routine takes him from the lower-left platform to the middle one, to the lower-right platform and back to the middle again. He then repeats it until he's hit.

After the first hit Ripper Roo goes into his next hopping routine which is: Middle-left platform, lower-centre platform, middle-right platform and middle-centre platform, do the same trick as before with the floating crates and don't fall off into the water or you'll have to start all over again.

Ripper's third and final routine takes him via the top-centre platform, the middle-right platform, the bottom-centre platform and then onto the middle-left platform. If you stay on the lower level you can just move left and right to trigger the TNT and therefore give Ripper his final toasting. Yes, you've done it already. To the next level...



THE LOST CITY

This massive side-scrolling feast starts with a few treats hidden behind the wall to the left. Jump off the ledge around the wall and try to land in front of the two crates. Smash the arrow crate if you want a 'perfect' and jump back around the wall.

When you're back on the main ledge, jump and run into the tunnel and pick up the mask crate inside and carry on to the right on the ledge, avoiding the moving wall. Hop onto the lizard and into the next tunnel where you'll find three extra lives and a bouncy crate full 'o' fruit.

Leave the tunnel and go right past the next moving wall and onto the floating ledge. This will only stay around for a few seconds, so jump straight off it onto the ledge on the right where you will encounter the first set of bats. One hangs from the ceiling as a marker point. Take note, every five seconds a further group of bats will fly past and curve up the screen where the first bat marker resides. Avoid these winged rodents and go into the next tunnel where you should find some more fruit and the level's first Tawna token.



Continue to the right, avoiding the bats and making sure you go inside each tunnel you come across (hitting the 'I' box inside). Avoid the next set of moving walls with caution as there's a checkpoint on the other side. Jump onto the stump below and up to the ledge which has the extra life and the N.Brio token floating above it. Collect these by jumping off the crate situated below them (it wouldn't be there if you hadn't hit that 'I' box earlier) and then move across the two floating ledges to the right.

You'll be greeted by a single fruit bearing platform with two rotating ledges circling around it.

Ignore the fruit and stay on the rotating platform – you'll need to jump off it and land on the top of the next set of moving walls and pick up the extra life sitting on top of them. Once done, fall into the hole on the right of the walls. From here you need to jump up and hit the stationary bat, drop into the next hole and wait for the bats to pass before jumping up into the tunnel nearby. A second Tawna token is your prize for doing so.



After that, jump on the lizard and carry on to the right where you'll soon hit the next checkpoint. Next up is a large hopping lizard which you need to bounce off if you want the N.Brio token and the extra life on top of the next set of moving walls.

The next new obstacle is a series of platforms that slide in and out of the level, requiring pixel-perfect jumps in order for you to get across the gaps. If you do this successfully, it's a short jump onto the rotating ledges and into the checkpoint. Stay on the ledges and let them carry you upwards until you get to the solid ledge. From here, collect the extra life and then jump onto the 'I' box to the left and quickly back onto the ledge.

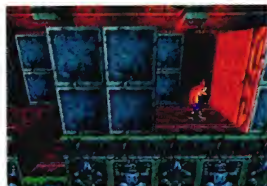
Continue hopping on and off the sliding platforms until you reach the top. Go to the left and spin into the big red jumping lizard. Run into the tunnel on the left and if you hit the 'I' box earlier, there should be a wad of crates waiting inside.

One contains the third N.Brio token, so you will be whisked off to his Bonus Round. Collect the lives he offers and head back to the main level.

Next up is a wobbly five-piece bridge. You will need to land bang in the middle of it to avoid death and then carry on to the left, grabbing the mid-air extra life and spinning into the red lizard.

Get across the two round ledges to your left and continue in that direction, quashing bats as you go. Leap over the four sliding ledges and into the next checkpoint. A set of two moving walls come next, but fortunately there's a gap between them. Wait for both walls to pop out and move back before you make your

run for the gap. There are more moving walls next, so use the same technique until you get to the final set. Here the right-hand wall retracts allowing you to run past it, the one on the left-hand side slides back leaving you with a split-second sprint to get past it in time.



Now you must bounce off the green lizard's head to get the floating crate and carry on to the left. Drop down the next ledge and onto the first lizard's head, wait for the flying bats to pass and then hop across onto the fat second lizard. Now jump up and spin into the stationary bat and then spin into the '?' crate that contains the third Tawna token. Yes, a lovely bonus round follows, same as before. Collect all the available lives and save your game progress.

Back in the main game, head left across the bridges (grabbing the extra life as you go) and then stand on the right edge of the platform where the green lizard is. Wait for him to jump at you, bounce off him and run left past the moving walls. The next lizard needs to be on the central ledge before you attack him, as there's a 'I' box above the middle ledge that must be hit after bouncing off his head.

Once you've done all that, grab all the fruit you can find and then head off to the left for the final leap into the teleporter. If you did it all 'perfectly', then you'll get the green Gem you wanted earlier, which now lets you go back to the "Jungle Rollers" level on Island One and get that 'perfect' score you wanted earlier. Alternatively, you can stick with it, collect the rest of the Gems and then do all those others bits later. It's entirely up to you.



Checkpoints: 4
Bonus Rounds: Tawna, N.Brio
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Green
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

TEMPLE RUINS

Walk through the pillars avoiding the spikes as you go (you can't jump through them, just walk past 'em) and soon enough you'll find a mask crate and a bouncy one full of fruit. Go left and jump across the thin ledge and onto the floating ledge then onto the solid ledge to the left. A blue snake will appear from the hole in the ledge and it just requires a simple spin into his head in order to get him out of the way.

Collect the big pile of crates in the corner and continue upwards, past the spikes, jump across the two floating ledges and into the extra life crate sitting next to a TNT crate. Detonate the TNT and jump left onto the moving pillar when it's on its way down. Wait for it to pop up, jump onto the ledge on the left and proceed left to the checkpoint.



Spin into the oncoming snake, grab the crates and jump through the spikes onto the moving pillar. Carry on jumping forwards onto the next pillars, but only leap when the one you're on is high and the one you're jumping onto is low. Jump off this last pillar onto the stationary one, and then off into the tunnel ahead.

Open all the crates you find en route, watch out for the bats and run through the crushing walls the second they begin to open. When you get to the end of the tunnel, wait for the bats to fly past and leap across the ledge into the big pile of crates – making sure you spin into the huge spider that falls in the middle of the ledge as you do.

After that, go straight ahead, past the spikes and onto the circular moving platform situated to the right of the ledge you're standing on. This will take you to another ledge nearby which you must hop onto. Watch for the flames to go out on the right, then leap across it and across the ledge that follows. Now you're on a solid ledge again, surrounded by crates. Smash 'em all and continue up screen, past some more spikes and spin into the snake at the end.

Now jump upwards across the flame and pillar and then jump from the circular pillars into the

next checkpoint. From there, jump up into the tunnel and continue through as before, collecting crates and avoiding bats as you go. Now jump onto the floating ledge when the pillar slightly behind it has sunk, then jump up to the pillar as it rises. Jump up again and you'll be on the solid ledge.



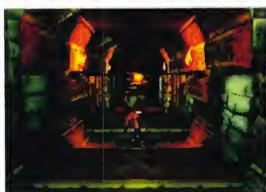
On the left, you'll see a fruit floating dangerously near the edge. Walk out off the ledge and collect that fruit – just trust me. As you do, a metal box will appear beneath your feet and if you keep walking to the left you'll reach a stack of hidden crates containing extra lives and fruit – I told you to trust me! Open all the crates and make your way back to the right, smashing every crate on your way if you want a 'perfect'. Walk past the spikes, open the crate and jump off the ledge onto the moving pillar.

Jump again across the flames and the floating ledge until you come to a pillar. Watch the pattern of the circular pillars, once one of them starts shaking it'll disappear for a while before popping back up again. Take note of this as you don't want to be on it when it disappears. So, jump to the right, then down onto the central pillar and carry on jumping downwards right the way up to where the next checkpoint lies. Kill the falling spider, open the crates below it, walk onto the circular ledge and it'll carry you off into the darkness once more.



Walk forwards onto the next ledge and wait for the flame to go out before you jump onto the next ledge with the extra life. You will find another bunch of circular pillars all twisting around as before. Use what you've learnt so far and make your way straight across the pillars and onto a solid ledge containing three extra life crates. Carry on forwards, jump across the two moving pillars and into the final ▶

► tunnel, opening all the crates you come across. As before, watch out for the bats and leap through the crushing walls as soon as they open and you're off into the exit. If you got a 'perfect', you'll get another clear Gem to add to your pile. Well done, that was a long one!



Checkpoints: 3
Bonus Rounds: None
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

ROAD TO NOWHERE

This level is very annoying. You have to master the art of timely jumps if you're gonna get through this alive. You also have to know what obstacles lie ahead before you even attempt to do it all in one go. The light wood planks are solid and you can stand on them for any length of time. The dark wood planks aren't solid and will disappear almost immediately. The cracked planks fall away the instant they're touched and the silvery type planks aren't actually planks at all, they're blocks of ice and you'll slip and slide as soon as you hit 'em. So be careful!

Right, on with the show. Hit the crates at the start of the level and make your way across the rope bridge, avoiding the planks as mentioned above. When you get to the first 'wall' containing the two TNT crates and one '?' crate, jump up and spin as you're falling. If done correctly, you will have opened the '?' crate, allowing you to hop over the two detonated TNT crates before they explode and onto the next section of bridge.



Make your way across the bridge as before, hit the checkpoint and collect the Tawna token. As you start to go across the next section of bridge, you'll be confronted by a warthog running up and down the planks. Wait for him to run at you and then leap over him and continue across the

bridge as fast as you can. At the end there are a couple of ice blocks to jump off in order to reach the solid ledge and the three crates nearby.

The next bridge section requires the most perfect precision jumping ever as there are only those dark planks to land on. Hesitate for a second and you're dead. The best bet is to run as fast as your little legs will carry you and perform several leaps of faith. Two free lives and a checkpoint await, should you succeed.



Carry on upwards across the next bridge, hopping over the warthog as before and get onto the next solid ledge containing two crates – one with a Tawna token inside. Move on up to the next ledge and the third checkpoint and get yourself across the next series of planks. Use the light planks to catch your breath and watch your shadow against the planks to help guide yourself down.

From here on in there are pure dark planks to test your jumping prowess, as well as another checkpoint and between that and the third Tawna token, you'll get an extra life (if you avoided the warthog, that is).



This Bonus Round is simplistic to say the least and you'll get two lives for completing it. Back to the main game and the last set of plank shenanigans are an absolute bastard. Follow the turtle to the edge of the bridge and jump on him.

Once he's flipped over, bounce off his back, over the gaping hole in the bridge and onto the other side. Repeat this jumping process for the next series of wide gaps in the bridge until you finally reach the exit. You'll probably notice several red Gems floating around, (meaning you missed loads of crates) but don't worry about them. You'll be back soon enough once you've got the relevant gem.



Checkpoints: 4
Bonus Rounds: Tawna
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: Red

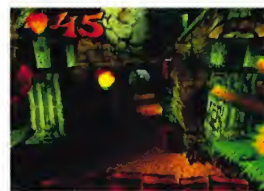
BOULDER DASH

Remember 'Boulders' from the first island? Good, because you'll need all the jumping skills discovered there in order to get you through this next level. Start the game as normal, collect all the crates in sight and head off through the tunnel ahead. As you come out of the tunnel, the huge boulder hovering above drops and will proceed to chase you through the level until you hit the next tunnel.

The first obstacle is a set of five pillars which can be cleared with relative ease. After those you have five of those little fence things, often accompanied by a pit. The basic pattern of these is fence, pit, fence, fence, pit, fence, fence etc. Whizz through those and you're into the tunnel where your first checkpoint sits.



The second boulder path means you're gonna have to jump across six slightly moving pillars instead of the previous five. After that you'll be confronted by a maze of tall crosses, where the aim of the game is to follow the fruit and try to hit any crates that come your way. Shortly after the crosses, there is another series of five pillars to negotiate and then you're into the tunnel containing a checkpoint (thank God!) and a wad of crates. Collect the lot.



There's a bouncy crate to collect just at the start of the final boulder stretch which you must

open. As soon as that's done, get your skates on and leg it over and around the collection of small fences and tall crosses respectively, using the fruit as your guide.

Another series of six pillars come into view which can be cleared easily, the tricky bit starts when the pits and tall crosses come back into play. Your best bet is to jump and guide yourself mid-air to get around the crosses in time. Then it's another batch of simplistic pillars to jump over and you're home and dry right next to the teleporter. Pink Gems are visible, but as you haven't got the pink Gem yet, you can't touch 'em. It'll come as no surprise you haven't scored a 'perfect' either. Well, not yet anyway...



Checkpoints: 2
Bonus Rounds: None
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: Pink

SUNSET VISTA

Prepare yourself for the longest level imaginable – Sunset Vista is a right old nightmare. Death opportunities await you at every turn and you'll soon discover it's also home to a whopping seven checkpoints in total. A perfect is possible, but you'll have to be one hell of a boombastic Bandicoot to pull that off first time. Anyway, let's get on with it.

Enter the tunnel and pick up the fruit, walk right along the level, over the flame and the bridge and onto the solid ledge. Collect the extra life and run past the moving walls which appear as a group of two, then three. Hit the stationary bat and enter the next tunnel, collect all the goodies as you do so. Keep heading right, hit the next bat and jump onto the stump, then onto the first of the three ledges. When the green lizard lands on the middle ledge, jump on him.



Carry on to the right and hit the bat as you're jumping onto the next stump. Jump onto the lizards one at a time, while avoiding the bats at all times. That out of the way, hit the next bat and you're into the checkpoint – the first of many. Run past the moving walls and make your way to the three circling platforms. Jump on the first one and stay on until it takes you to the ledge where the two extra life crates are waiting. Collect them and move on to the right, over the circling ledges and the little stumps.

Now you're faced with a series of ledges that slide in and out of the wall behind at certain intervals. Make your way across them and into the next checkpoint. (There's nothing in that tunnel in case you were wondering). After the checkpoint you need to continue right, past the two moving walls, then past the three moving walls and drop into the hole below, hitting the stationary bat as you do so. After the rest of the bats have gone past, jump right across the flame and onto the stump. After the next set of bats go by, jump up, hit the next bat and land on the green lizard.



Three more moving walls need to be passed. When all three of 'em slide forward and back together you can run right and jump past the next two as they both withdraw into the wall. Here's your third checkpoint Bandicoot, use it. Now you're faced with some more of those ledges that pop in and out of the wall.

Hop your way up to the top of these ledges using techniques I taught you earlier and when you get to the flame on the left, wait for it to go out and then hop onto it and off to the rotating ledge above. Let the ledge carry you round to the next solid ledge. When it does, get off.

Hit the three crates in front and you'll get your first Tawna token. Keep using the ledges until you get to a room containing a bouncy crate and some fruit. Collect these and go left across the two bridges where you will find a thin ledge in between them to help you across with relative ease. Enter the next tunnel,

hitting the fourth checkpoint as you go, move left to where the moving walls have little platforms underneath 'em.

Wait for the first wall to slide back into the wall, leaving the little platform behind and then start making your way across. Keep going left – very carefully – until you get to a pile of crates. There's a mask and two extra lives in there for you.

Make your way up the small ledges and smack the bat on the right. Chase the rest of the bats to the left and quickly jump on the ledges until you get to the flaming torch. Jump over this and open the next pile of crates: After that's done, keep using the circling ledges until you come across your fifth checkpoint of the level.



Go right and make the red lizard follow you back to the left. Jump onto his head (killing him) and off it and into the 'I' box above. This will make loads of crates appear in the back room, so get in there, fill your pockets full of free goodies (including the mask and a Cortex token) and leave the room and head right. Three moving walls pulsate. Wait for them all to pop out of the wall and the left one to retract before moving past them. Make sure you hit the bat as you pass.

Jump down onto the pillar below, hang about for the bats to pass and jump across to the right. Next up is a set of four moving walls. Once through them, grab the two crates, pocket the Cortex token and an extra life and get yourself into the gap before the next set of walls start. Catch your breath, run to the right when the walls move and jump to the right, smashing the mask and the extra life crates. Hit the sixth checkpoint – you've earned it.



Shortly after that is the second Tawna token. Grab it. Jump right and you'll be confronted by a

massive group of moving walls, complete with wafer-thin ledges below. Wait for the large section of the wall to move back and the thin ledge to slide out, then run like buggery across the to the right before the big wall pops out and into your face again.

Go into the small tunnel and collect the crates. From here, jump from the thin ledge onto the circling ledge and off that onto another set of circling ledges. Jump into the background tunnel and pick up an extra life along with two other crates. Stay where you are, just move slightly to the left and you'll discover the third Cortex token, taking you away to another bonus round.



Jump to the right onto the metal boxes, then jump right onto the TNT crate. Run right until you eventually stop bouncing, then jump up and smash the next crate so you can jump up and over the stack in front of you and leg it across the next batch of TNT delights. The next bunch of crates are stacked pretty high, so jump high and spin mid-air to smash the top crates and land safely on the other side. One more jump to the right and you've got one of the two hidden keys.

Back in the main game, jump down and right onto the next ledge and jump across the torches. Go right and you'll get the third Tawna token. Yep, it's bonus time. Get through Tawna's stage and you'll be able to save your game – which is nice. Back to the game once more, where you now need to leap up a second bunch of sliding ledges which move slightly faster than before. At the top of these there is a stack of three crates to destroy and shortly after, a red lizard on the small ledge.

Jump on him then go to the right and open the crates in the back room. Now leap into the teleporter where you'll discover that not only have you achieved another 'perfect' and a secret key, but have got yourself another clear Gem too. Yahoo indeed.

Checkpoints: 7
Bonus Rounds: Tawna, Cortex
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

KOALA KONG



This muscle-bound bear will wiggle his butt at you for a while before he starts launching big lumps of coal at your head. After his third lump lands awfully close to you, you'll see him struggle in picking up his fourth lump.

This sign indicates you can punt the oncoming rock (once it's landed of course) back at the furry nonce before you. Wait for the mine carts to pass, leaving a slight gap for you to punt back the coal and then spin into the coal and watch as it hits Rolf Harris' mate square in the face.

Repeat this process (while at all times avoiding the TNT crates) until you have hit him four times. He'll fall to his knees and you'll be on your way to island three!



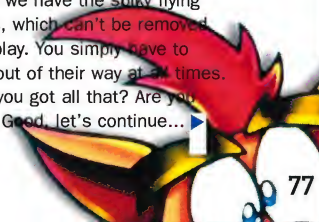
ISLAND THREE

The third and final island is home to Dr Cortex and his band of not-so merry men: Pinstripe Potoroo and Dr Nitrus Brio. You'll also find most of the coloured Gems dotted around this last island, allowing you to go back to the previous two islands and finally achieve those perfect scores! Right, let's go to work...

HEAVY MACHINERY

Before we start properly, let's just go over a few pointers that should come in handy. You've got three new obstacles to conquer on this last island, each one a nasty Cortex robot. The Flying cameras can only be destroyed by spinning into them – NOT by jumping! You'll die first.

The next robotic pain in the butt is the three wheeled robots. They can be disposed of by jumping on their heads or alternatively spinning into them. Finally we have the spiky flying robots, which can't be removed from play. You simply have to keep out of their way at all times. Have you got all that? Are you sure? Good, let's continue...





Start the level and head right, past three cameras and two of the three-wheeled bots. Keep going to the right and you'll come to a set of pipes. The blue ones are cold and can be touched, the red ones however, are to be avoided at all times – one touch and you're fried to a crisp. Go over the pipes, past the spiky robot and you'll get to a set of crates. Smash the middle one and jump to the right before the TNT explodes. Open the '?' crate nearby and you have your first Tawna token.

Head right again until you get to a drop containing two spiked robots. Jump up high and try to fall between the two of them. You will (hopefully) land on a tiny ledge below, where there is an extra life, a mask and the first N.Brio token. Keep going left and get on the round platform. This will take you back up to the top where you fell. Head right once more, over the robot pit and smash open the next crate which should contain another N.Brio token. Jump to the right and head on up the conveyor belt, breaking all the crates as you go.

Jump over the pipes and onto the next conveyor belt, getting rid of all unwanted enemies as you do so. When you reach the end, get onto the round platform and collect the extra lives floating nearby. Go left now and watch out for the spiky bots. When you've done so, hop across the three floating ledges and there is another Tawna token, plus a checkpoint further to the left. Next up are three steaming pipes. These puff out hot steam at regular intervals, so watch for them to spit out their gas and then hop over them.



Keep going left, past another pipe and you'll find an extra life crate. Step onto the round ledge and it'll take you to your third Tawna token. After the bonus round, walk downstairs and get yourself over the hot pipes to the

left, past the steaming pipe and onto another round ledge. This will take you down to the next bit of the level.

Head right now, past the three-wheeled bot and grab the floating mask crate. Get on the next round ledge which will take you down some more, then run right across the next two floating ledges and jump onto the big red ledge. This baby will fire you skywards into a load of stacked crates. Plough through the lot of 'em and there's a mask crate sitting on top of the pile. Collect it and carry on.

Now go right, across some more floating ledges, past the next load of steaming pipes and onto the next round ledge. Stay on this as it takes you up between two blue pipes and two red ones. Leap over the pipes and get on the next round ledge and head to the far right. Here you'll find two more round ledges and a '?' crate hiding the third N.Brio token. Grab that and you're off to another bonus round where you need to bounce to the right, across the crates and hit the '!' box. Get to the end and you'll receive four extra lives and be whisked back to the main game in no time.

Jump onto the round ledge which will drop down, letting you run to the right and bounce off the big red ledge. Break all the crates above, collecting four extra lives and hit the final teleporter. Congratulations, you've just finished the level. Hopefully, with a perfect score.

Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: Tawna, N.Brio
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

CORTEx POWER

Head forward, kill the three-wheeled menace and jump over the electrified poles. These are identical to the pipes in the previous level; the red ones burn, the blue ones don't. There is a pulsating zapper inside these poles though, so watch out for its blast which happens about every four seconds. Keep heading forwards, jump onto the next three-wheeler and collect the bouncy crate and the mask. Now you have a choice to make: Left or right? Left or right?

Go right and get the extra lives and then get yourself across the green toxic waste with some well-timed jumps. Get over the red and blue poles and the following toxic waste and hit that ever-

handy checkpoint. Jump over the following set of red poles and pipes and go down the hill, over the next pole and grab the mask crate in front. Now you've got another choice to make: Left or right? Left or right?

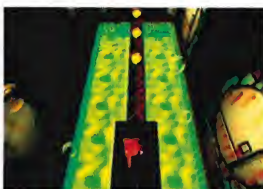


Right again and head straight up those stairs. At the top you'll see, and no doubt hear, one of Pinstripe's henchmen blasting away on his machine gun. Hide behind the wall to the left and wait for him to laugh out loud.

You then need to run behind the right-hand side wall and wait for him to shoot his gun once more. Now leg it towards him and spin into his face while he's giggling. Now hit that '!' box on the right and grab the extra life from above the TNT crate. Run back downstairs while the TNT explodes and head off down that left-hand turn.

Jump through the gap between two spiked beasts when they both head towards the wall, jump over the toxic waste and grab the two extra life crates near the blue pipe. Head forwards and hit the second checkpoint. Continue and jump past the spiky robot and hop onto the moving platform until you get to the next spiked problem. Wait until it moves to the right, then jump and steer yourself around it as your platform moves up and down.

Land on the sinking ledge and quickly jump up and through the door. Get rid of the three-wheeler and sprint past the small electrified pipes. Open the extra life crate and run past the next set of small pipes. Jump diagonally over the following set of red pipes and keeping heading up, smashing the crates.



Walk through the next door and if you hit that '!' crate earlier, there'll be a long line of crates forming a bridge over the toxic waste below. Smash all these crates (using the same technique as N.Sanity Beach) and head on

through the following door into the final room of this level. Simply collect the four crates in there and hit the teleporter. No perfect just yet. You'll have to come back later.

Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: None
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: Blue

GENERATOR ROOM

Smash the three crates to the left and head on down the path until you get to the next set of crates. Break open the '?' crate and leap out of the way of the exploding TNT crate, spinning into the camera as you go.

Carry on up to the next stack of crates, break the one sitting on top of the arrow box and then jump through as the TNT crate bounces about. Hop onto the floating ledge, jump up and hit the camera and jump once more onto the floating ledge and walk up to the '!' box.

As you hit this, a line of crates will appear in the top right hand corner of the screen. Walk back onto the floating ledge and leap over to the right. Crack open the '?' crate and grab the Tawna token and then jump up and onto that bridge. Head to the right and where there is a large floating ledge with five crates sitting on it. Quickly smash these and get back on the bridge before the ledge collapses.



Break all the crates inside the bridge and hit that checkpoint. Jump left to get another Tawna token and carry on jumping left, spinning into the camera en-route. Now face upwards and hop onto the ledge moving up and down. Get on it when it's low and leap off onto the second ledge, watching out for the camera at all times. Carry on across the next two similar ledges and you'll come across the third Tawna token, taking you off to bonus round land. Do this and you'll get a few more lives, plus you should be about 55 per cent complete. Not bad, Bandicoot.

Back in the main game, you need to walk right, grab the mask and make five tricky-as-you-like leaps to the right, over a couple

of those up and down ledges and a floating ledge. Watch out for the robots in between 'em! Open the stack of crates and stroll down and onto the round ledge which will carry you down to a solid ledge. Jump on it and head left to the next round ledge. This one will take you to another ledge surrounded by cameras, which you must spin into.

Head left until you get to the next round ledge. Jump left onto the ledge and then up to reach the second checkpoint of the level. A spiky robot is next, just after a small gap, closely followed by a wall of crates.

Smash these, collect the contents and jump across the floating ledge surrounded by the two spiky robots. From here, jump right up the staircase made from floating ledges and get on the last round ledge – this will take you to the right.

Get off the ledge and go straight on up to the stack of crates. Hit the middle one and get out of the way as the TNT crate explodes. Head off down the ramp, spinning into the cameras as you go and get onto the round ledge on the left. This takes you to the left where you need to jump over the oncoming red pipe and land back on the round ledge.

This can prove quite tricky. The next ledge will take you up to two blue pipes which require the same tactics as the red one. Once you've got past those, it's a small jump onto a flat ledge and then onto another round one.



This final ledge takes you right up to the teleporter main door, which also happens to have three extra life crates sitting around doing nothing. Collect all of these, go through the door and you're into the teleporter exit where you'll get a nice orange Gem. This beautiful gem allows you to go back and get that 'perfect' score on the Upstream level. But of course, you can do that later once you've collected all the coloured gems, can't you? Yes, you can.

Checkpoints: 2
Bonus Rounds: Tawna
Gem For Perfect: Orange
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

TOXIC WASTE

A spot of barrel avoidance is required on this level. Start by collecting all the free crates and then wait for the barrel-tossing nonce in front to throw one at you. As soon as he has, run towards him and spin into his mid-riff. This will kill him instantly.

Head on up the ramp, grab the mask and continue up the following ramp, hopping over the barrels as you go. At the top of the next ramp lies six crates containing some extra lives and one Tawna token. Obviously break these and collect what's inside.



Run up to the next ramp and hit the barrel boy as instructed earlier and it's a straight run up the next ramp and into the checkpoint. Shortly after, there's another arrow and bouncy crate to grab and then you need to head on up the next ramp. Once done you'll find an extra life and another Tawna token. Now get up the next ramp and hit the next barrel boy as before. At the top of the next ramp is an extra life you need – so get it. As you start to climb the next ramp, you'll hear a mysterious banging noise...

Bouncing barrels! Yes, the barrel boy has started to bounce his kegs at you as well as rolling them, so be on your guard at all times. The barrel pattern is: Two rolling ones, a bouncing one and then two normal ones and so on. You need to watch where the bouncing ones land on the ramps – they'll always land in the same place. This allows you to walk up to where the barrels land and sit safely just below their contact point. Each bouncing one that follows will now bounce off right over your head.

Get to the top of the next ramp, grab the crate and ignite the TNT then jog on up to the next ramp (watch out for gaps in the ramps from now on!). Hit the next barrel boy you come across, after he's launched his bouncing keg and then get up the next ramp and hit that checkpoint! Collect the next bouncy crate and soldier on up the next ramp. From here onwards all the barrels are of the bouncing variety, so watch where they land and slowly make your way forwards. Eventually, you'll get to a stack of crates with

an extra life in between. Grab it, let the TNT explode and then grab the '?' crate sitting further up screen. This is your third Tawna token, so it's bonus round time once more. This time, Tawna's level is full of TNT so make your way to the right as quickly as possible. When done, save your game and collect the two bonus extra lives.



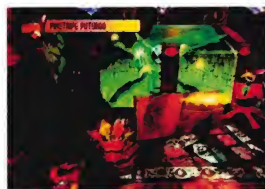
Back in the main game you now need to go for the final ramp. Stop at each one of the small ledges on your way and the barrels should fly right over you, letting you spin the last barrel-chucker out of the picture and leap victoriously into the teleporter. You're now 62 per cent complete and you have another blue Gem to your credit too. Well done old bean!

Checkpoints: 2
Bonus Rounds: Tawna
Gem Awarded For Perfect: Blue
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

PINSTRIPE POTOROO

Meet Pinstripe. He's a packin' a big gun and he's aimin' it your way, so stay outta the way or you'll wind up dead. Capish? Anyhow, this loopy zoot suit weasel will dance around his office, blasting at you and only occasionally stopping to reload – which is when you must make your attack move.

From the start, he'll simply skip from one side of the room to the other, shooting as he goes. What you must do is stay in either the left or right hand corner as he's firing and then jump out and spin into his head while he's frantically loading his gun.



Once you've managed to do that three times, Pinstripe will change his attack pattern. He'll now continue firing at you. Jump onto the table in the middle of the room and then get back on the floor. After he's done this twice,

he'll stop to play around with his gun again. This is when you must make your move.



Do this five times and he'll now change his pattern so that he reloads his gun only when he's on top of the table. Wait for him to stop firing and leap forwards, hit him in the head for the final time and sit back and watch as he goes bonkers, breaks the huge window at the back of the office and falls down dead like the weasel he is. Good riddance.

THE HIGH ROAD

If you hated the Road To Nowhere level, you're gonna despise this as it's almost identical in every way. When you start the level, walk down and collect the extra lives and that piece of fruit hanging in the air.

Walk as if you're going to go straight off the edge and you'll see a plank appear, then another. Take a massive leap off the two planks and hopefully another two planks will appear. Keep hopping in the same direction over another two sets of planks and you'll find a ledge with four crates sitting on it. Collect the lot and go back to the official start.



You know the score here. Get your butt across the bridge by landing on the appropriate planks and watch out for the warthogs. The first wall you'll reach is metal, with only one crate stuck in the middle of it. Jump up and spin into the middle box which will form an escape hole for you.

Dive through it when the metal box is bouncing about. After the wall come those cheeky turtles which, as you know, need hopping on so that they turn into little trampolines. One you've got past four of the little blighters it's a small step to the checkpoint and your first Tawna token. Onward and even more turtles to conquer, most of them placed on top of the dark and ►

► cracked planks. Keep your eye on your shadow like before and you should be able to bounce your way across fairly easily until picking up your next Tawna token and hitting yet another checkpoint. Between here and the next checkpoint, you're gonna have to get past two warthogs with the aid of only one turtle shell. You should do fine.



Checkpoint number three arrives and shortly after you have a load of dark planks to get across as quickly as possible. There is a single turtle shell along the way too. Get through that and there is another checkpoint waiting as well as a TNT crate, a '?' crate and a metal box. You need to hit the middle '?' crate and jump on top of the metal box. Now jump directly up and there's a hidden extra life for you. Run off onto the next bridge before the TNT wipes you out.

Another set of tricky turtle-related bouncing is next with the third Tawna token being the prize if you get across in one piece. In the bonus round that follows, simply go right and jump off the arrow crate up to a second higher level of crates. Head right and Tawna will save your game and congratulate you on being 67 per cent complete.

Back to the final stage of the level and – surprise, surprise – it's another bridge. Use the turtles again to get yourself across the last bridge and you're into the teleporter, with a perfect score under your belt. Nice one.

Checkpoints: 4

Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: None

SLIPPERY CLIMB

Head off down those background doors and collect all the goods inside before coming back to the foreground and running left. Get up those disappearing stairs and on the moving ledge. As the ledge goes to its furthest point to the left, jump across and onto the next ledge.

Repeat this process until you're under another background door. Hop in there and grab the extra life and then hop back onto

the ledge. Keep heading left until you land on the solid ledge with the jail bird swinging his arms out of the window. Jump on his hands and he'll disappear.

To the left of here floats a huge buzzard you must bounce off to get onto the circling ledges nearby. Once you've made it, keep going left by bouncing off the buzzards and landing on the circling ledges. Hit the backroom mid-way and smash the two crates in there and return to the circling ledges once more. Leap off another buzzard and you'll be on a solid ledge with a door. Grab the crates from inside the doorway and you'll get your first N.Brio token of the level.



Keep going left across the sliding ledges and bounce off all the buzzards that follow. Wait for the disappearing staircase to pop up and get yourself up to the ledge at the top of them. Go up the next set of stairs and head right and break the crates. Jump onto and straight off the sliding ledge to the left and land on the buzzard below. This will fire you up to the next solid ledge where you need to wait for the next set of stairs to appear and get up 'em as quick as you can and off them equally as swiftly.

Now there are a load of those sliding ledges to get up (watch their patterns and leap accordingly) followed by some stairs leading to a solid platform with a nutty scientist at one end. This dude will toss exploding test tubes at you in a fairly rhythmic pattern. Wait for the gap and then spin into him. Another set of stairs will appear to the right, go down them and onto the circling ledges before you. Jump off these onto the buzzard, off him and onto the next solid ledge. Keep doing this routine until you get to a door with two crates. Open the crates and you'll get another extra life plus a second N.Brio token.

Carry on going right and hop off the top of the three jail birds waving their arms and get past the two buzzards waiting nearby. Grab the crates in the following doorway and as you've just picked up the third token, you're off to N.Brio bonus round. These rounds are usually extremely

tricky and this one is no exception. You need to bounce off the arrow crates, avoid the TNT, hit the extra life crates and bounce to the right to complete the round.



Back in the main game, head off to the right once more across the ledges and jump off the buzzards as before – while at all times not forgetting the crates hidden in the doorways. Now you're at the last ledge but unfortunately, you're not the only one on there. Yep, another test tube tossing scientist is all that stands between you and the teleporter. Spin into him as instructed before, scoop up the four extra lives from the doorways and take a small step into the teleporter. Hopefully, you'll have got a 'perfect', plus a red Gem, allowing you to go back to the Native Fortress level and get that 'perfect' you missed. But don't go there just yet, please.

Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: N.Brio

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Red

Gem Needed For Perfect: None

LIGHTS OUT

On this rather dark and somewhat spooky level, you need to hit the mask crates in order to shed some light on the matter. Each mask crate you hit will flick on the light switch for a short time. Fail to reach the next mask crate before the lights go out and you'll be playing the rest of the level in the dark. You'll probably fall off the first ledge you come to anyway. So, to recap, hit the bloody mask crates!

Right off we go... hit the first mask crate and head off down the tunnel, leaping across the gaps until you get the next mask. You must leap onto the following green floating ledges quickly, as they disappear after being hit and continue down the tunnel where a checkpoint and another mask crate are waiting.

The next set of jumps are onto moving brown ledges, so if you miss one of them, you're a dead man. Carry on and get up and run into the next mask crate. Nicely positioned next to an extra life, may I add.



Next up are several green and brown ledges. As before, the brown ones move about, so make sure you hit your target! A mask crate and an extra life are waiting for you at the end of the tunnel. You need to hit the mask crate and carry on down the tunnel, making sure you hop or spin into the red-eyed rats that now creep towards you from the darkness. The next mask crate you'll come across has a checkpoint next to it. Hit them both and run off down the tunnel once more.

There are more ledge jumps ahead as well as a load more rats and then you can catch your breath with an extra life crate and another mask. Keep running down the tunnel, but as soon as you see the thin line of bricks across the floor, stop.

As you do, a massive swinging blade will whizz past the end of your snout and continue to do so at a passable pace. Wait for it to swing left and walk on down the tunnel, past another blade situated above the pit and straight on past another two, further up ahead.

Grab the next mask so you can see what you're doing and keep on storming down the tunnel, over the pits, past the blades whilst spinning through the oncoming rats. You'll eventually get to a point where there is a floating green ledge hovering in between two blades. Wait for the nearest blade to swing out of your way and then swiftly hop onto the ledge and back off it before it falls.



The teleporter is just up ahead now, but you might just run out of light before you get there. Bugger. In between you and the next level there are a series of blades (three in total) and some more of those green floating ledges. The trick is to time your dash towards the exit and continually run and jump your way to victory.

If you do, you're onto the next bout of platform jolliness, but unfortunately you can't get a 'perfect' as you need the yellow Gem from The Lab level. When you do get the Gem though, you can return to here, get the 'perfect' and receive a pink Gem. Now you can go back to the Boulder Dash level and score a perfect on here too.

Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: None

Gem For Perfect: Purple

Gem Needed For Perfect: Yellow

JAWS OF DARKNESS



Right, break the crates and head right, spinning into the blue snake and jump across the two floating ledges to the right. Spin the big spider off the ledge and keep jumping across to the right, over the moving pillars, not forgetting to leap over the flaming torch. Keep going right until you get to a group of pillars moving around in a circular pattern. Jump over these and onto the long row of crates. Pick up the mask, kill the next blue snake and run past those nasty pillars with the spiky exteriors.

From here, jump across the flaming torch (when it has gone out of course) and onto the floating ledge. A quick jump off here and you're into the tunnel. Take a breather and head off down the tunnel and collect the extra life crate whilst keeping a sly eye out for the incoming bats. Run straight at and through the three slamming walls, out of the tunnel and over the two moving pillars. Get on that floating ledge and let it glide you casually down onto the next portion of platform hell below.



Jump down over the pillars, avoiding the spikes and then leap from the extinguished flame, onto a floating ledge and into the first checkpoint. Grab the '?' crate beside the other two crates

and you will get your first Cortex token of the level. Wayhey! From here go left, get rid of the spider and jump on the floating ledge. A collection of three crates is waiting nearby, one containing the first Tawna token, so grab 'em and move on.

There are a group of those circling pillars here that will annoy all who play. Jump up and to the left on the pillars, spin into the snake and keeping going left until you get to some solid footing. Open the crate and get past some more of those spiky pillars.

A spider will appear mid-way, kill him and get past the next set of spiked pillars. At this point, may I just mention that if you got the blue Gem on the Toxic Waste level, you can now access one of the secret bits. But more about that later. Let's concentrate on completing this level first.

Get into the oncoming tunnel, breaking all the crates that get in your way and, of course, look out for those pesky bats. Continue forwards, past the two crushing walls and hit that checkpoint. Get over the two moving pillars and jump on the round ledge – this will take you upwards. Run through the spiked pillars and watch out for the snake – you need to jump onto him instead of spinning this time around. This is because there is a stack of crates just behind him, so if you spin, he'll break the crates and lose you the second Cortex token. Not a good move. Jump onto the snake (killing him, leaving the crates intact) and hop across and collect all the crates and their hidden goodies.

Now jump left and up along the floaty ledges until you get to the one with the fruit hovering next to it. Here you need to walk towards the fruit, into the darkness. If you walked off at the right position on the left, you'll see a ledge appear beneath which will take you onto a solid ledge. Jump downwards, through the spikes and open the two crates. One will contain the third Cortex token and you're off to the bonus round again.

Take your time here and jump across the crates and land on the TNT crate above the '!' box. Wait for the countdown to reach one, then jump across the two '?' crates as the TNT explodes behind you. Now the white box outlines will fill up as the TNT has triggered the '!' crate below it. Walk to the right, jump onto the next TNT crate and follow the same procedure as before to get to safety. Keep going right and

you'll get the second hidden key from Cortex, letting you play the top secret hidden level, Fumbling In The Dark.

Back to the main game and you need to go through the next set of spiked pillars and walk to the right, letting another bridge appear beneath your feet. Follow the ledge and jump up and right into the next bunch of crates. A second Tawna token is hidden inside one of them. Head off into the screen, over the moving pillars and up into the next tunnel. Hit the crates, collect the third Tawna token and you're bonus round bound once more.



This one's simple, so just do it. Collect the extra lives and save your game. Back in the game again, we're into the final straight. Go down the tunnel, past the five crushing walls and you're into the teleporter. If you ain't got the blue Gem, you ain't got a 'perfect'. Come back and do it at a later date.

Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: Tawna, Cortex

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear

Gem Needed For Perfect: Blue

CASTLE MACHINERY

This is another one of those side-view platform fests. Lucky old you. Anyway, start the level, walk right and fall down that hole. From there, go left, spin into the three-wheeled freaks and cameras on route, get over the pipes and get past the two floating spiked robots above the floating platforms. Keep going left and run up those stairs with all your might. Now hop onto the small round ledge and let it carry you upwards into the sky.

Walk off it to the left when you see the red hot pipe throbbing above you and land on the other floating platform. This will continue to take you skywards and into the next set of red hot pipes. As before, walk left onto the next platform and jump up to the right to collect the mask.

Next up is a series of conveyor belts like you encountered before. Get on these and head right, watching out for the pipes of doom as you go and you'll come to some smaller conveyor belts.

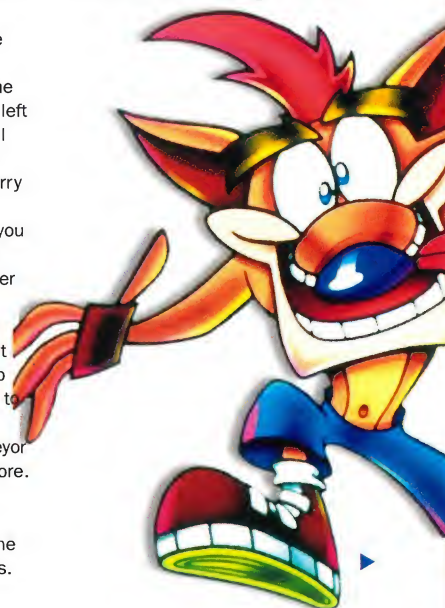
These will let you fall down, avoiding the pipes, so do as such. Spin into any cameras you meet and work your way down to the bottom of the level. Go to the right form here and there's a checkpoint for you to hit.



Jump right onto another one of those round ledges which will take you up to the red pipes again. The same technique applies, but go right on the first one, left on the second and right on the third. Otherwise, you're toast. Jump up and left from here onto the fourth platform and then onto the fifth which will take you up to a solid ledge, complete with mask and extra life crates. Now go left and get over the next set of steam pipes.

Go down the stairs and left into the next playing area. Get over the red pipes and jump off the top of the three-wheeled beast and bounce over the next set of pipes. Walk onto the red ledge and let it bounce you upwards into a bunch of juicy fruit. Go onto the next red ledge and jump up onto the six bouncy crates on your right.

Fall down to the right and jump over the next red ledge. If you jump on it, you'll hit the red pipes above it. From here, walk right and go up the stairs and onto the four red ledges. These will shoot you upwards and to the right, where there's a bunch of three-wheeled robots waiting. Kill them.





Keep going right, down the stairs and into the second checkpoint. Next up is a spiked robot, some red pipes and a conveyor belt. Practice what I've taught you earlier about these problems to conquer them. On the right, you'll see a wad of crates with some extra life ones underneath. Break the highest crates in the middle first and then bounce back to the left and start to bounce along the crates from left to right. Collect them all if you want that 'perfect' score.

After that it's pretty straight forward. Just run right past the two spiked robots and jump right onto the round ledge. This will carry you up to a small solid ledge. A larger ledge will then appear on your left and if you get on, will take you up into the heavens. Kill the camera as you proceed skywards. When you get to the top, jump left over the pipes and make your way across the steam pipes one at a time.

There's only a few of those circular ledge/ hot pipe avoidance areas to go through and then of couple of three-wheeled geeks to smash and the teleporter lies just to your left. Get a 'perfect' and you'll receive a clear Gem. Well done.

Checkpoints: 2

Bonus Rounds: None

Gem Awarded For Perfect: Clear
Gem Needed For Perfect: None

NITRUS BRIO

This boss character requires patience, skill and a load of perfectly timed leaps. You need to stay away from him as often as possible or he'll blow you up within seconds.



Get yourself down to the bottom of the screen and stay there. Brio will throw test tubes at you – obviously you need to avoid them when they land. The pink ones will simply explode, the green

ones however, will spawn green slimy beasts that try to land on your head.

Wait for them to hop onto the floor three times and then leap onto their heads. Any other contact with these will kill you, making you start all over again. Keep doing this until Brio gives up his test tube-tossing plan and eventually drinks one of his chemical cocktails. He will then morph into the Brio Monster and continue to hammer his way across the lab in an attempt to squash you. At this moment, a large brick will fall to the floor. Very handy.



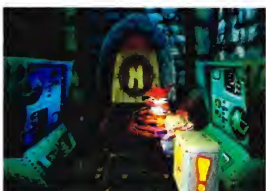
Jump on the brick and stay there until the Brio Monster comes up close. When you can almost smell his breath, leap onto his head and he'll scuttle back into his corner before starting his attack again. Hit him three times on his bounce and he's dead, you're happy and we're all onto the next level.

THE LAB

Congratulations little Bandicoot, you've made it to the last proper level of the game and all that stands between you and the nasty Dr Cortex is this fairly short level. The '!' boxes (that you've seen several times before now I'm sure) feature strongly in this level. They require a slight hit and in return, they'll open doors – which is handy.

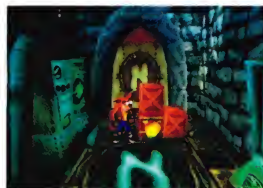
So, walk forward, hit the first '!' box and keep going in that direction. Continue forwards, hitting the boxes (they sometimes open trapdoors in the floor as well as doors) and keep going, right the way up to the first '?' crate. There's a Tawna token inside for you.

From here, walk through the electrified pillars (like you've done many times before) and hit the next two '!' boxes at the same time. This will allow you to pass through the next tunnel.



Now grab the second '?' crate for another Tawna token and hit the '!' box near the trapdoor and run straight across. You'll now be confronted by a bouncing yellow blob. This requires a leap to the head to kill it, once done continue forwards, through the door and get past the electrified pillars. You should now be standing besides a stack of crates, with another stack just up ahead. Smash the first pile and you'll find a '!' box hidden in the middle. Ignore this for a moment and go and collect the second pile of crates.

Now don't spin into these, jump. There's some TNT inside this pile, so a spin will kill you. Collect all the normal crates first and then start the TNT countdown. Hit the '!' box you ignore just seconds earlier and go through the door after the TNT has exploded. Collect the extra life, jump over the small gap in the floor and open the next '?' crate. Your third Tawna token is inside here, so it's bonus round time once again!



This bonus round is well easy. Just hop across to the right and save your game (you should be about 84 per cent by my reckoning). Once you're back in the main game, hit the next '!' box and go through the door, jump over the gap and there should be a mad lab assistant standing around, complete with electrified hands. These will pulsate electricity at regular intervals. Jump over the gap and run straight at him. When you get up close, spin into him (making sure his hands aren't electrified) and he'll stagger backwards, slightly dazed.

Wait for his hands to stop crackling, and do it again and again, until he falls off the ledge at the back. Now head onwards, hit the next '!' box and run across the trapdoor and into the next room.

Another hopping yellow blob will now appear and it requires killing swiftly using the same technique as before. Now jump the gap into the next room, hit the two '!' boxes, jump over another gap and spin into the first – and only – checkpoint of this level.



Another lab assistant is waiting here, so get rid of him as you did the other moments earlier and continue through the level. Hit the next '!' box and go through the trapdoor and go through the door that follows it.

You need to start the denotation process with the stack of TNT crates and then jump back down the level and onto the ledges at the side of the trapdoor. For safety reasons, obviously. Wait here for the TNT to explode and then jump back across the gap and through the door. Collect that extra life – you'll need it.

By hitting the next '!' box, you'll be able to run across the closed trapdoor and right up to the next nutty lab assistant. Spin into him like you did the others and jump over the following gaps, hitting the '!' boxes as you go.

Now you've got some more of those electrified pillars to contend with. Gulp! There's also one of those '!' boxes that you need to hit sitting in between them too. Arse. Oh yeah, there's a hopping yellow blob to kill at the same time too. Bugger.

Stand on the left of the screen and wait for the blob to show himself. Bounce onto him as he gets up close and land on the '!' box on the other side of the first set of pillars. Hit the '!' box and get through the door. Hit the next '!' box and then run through the next door. Wait for the trapdoor to close and then run through to the next room. Now all you have to do is get past three TNT crates.

Simply bounce off the second TNT crate, land on the third one and then leap off victoriously into the teleporter exit. If you get a 'perfect' score here, you'll get a yellow Gem for being so great. This gem now allows you to go back to the "Lights Out" level and bag the purple Gem for your collection. You can even go back to the "Great Gate" level too and get your 'perfect' score there. Which ain't bad, is it? Right, now where's that pathetic nonce Dr Neo Cortex?

Checkpoints: 1

Bonus Rounds: Tawna

Gem For Perfect: Yellow

Gem Needed For Perfect: None

THE GREAT HALL & DR. NEO CORTEX



This isn't really a level, to be honest. It just decides which ending you'll see when you've completed the game. If you jump straight ahead into the teleporter you'll go to the final level and fight Cortex. Beat him to a pulp and you'll get the normal ending. To watch the proper special ending (I know want to), simply jump across the seemingly never-ending clear Gems and go straight up to, and through, the big red door.

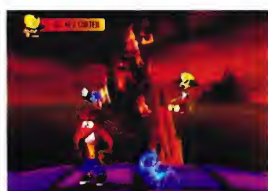
Here's the final crunch. You're standing on Cortex's big purple blimp and he's whizzing around firing plasma bolts at your head. Each time you manage to hit Cortex, he'll change his attack pattern accordingly.

Here's the rundown: From the start Cortex will fire two purple bolts, one green, two more purple and another green. Get out of the way of the purple ones, but spin into the green ones and they'll fly back at Cortex (like you did with Koala Kong earlier in the game).

Once you've hit him, he'll start firing as such: One purple, a blue, another purple, two blue, two green and then he'll repeat the pattern. The blue ones, by the way, don't come directly at you – instead they'll fly about and more often than not, attack from the sides.



You have to walk under the first high blue bolt and over the low ones. Hit the green bolts back at Cortex, avoid all the others and then fire the next green one back at the good Doctor.



The two bolts will be floating around and combine before hitting him. But don't worry about that. After taking his second hit, Cortex changes his attack pattern yet again.

This time it's one purple bolt, a low blue one, a high blue one, another purple, one green, another purple, three twisting blue, two green ones and two purple. Then the whole pattern repeats itself. Hit all three of the green bolts and they'll combine as before, then they'll strike.

When Cortex has been hit three times, the pattern changes once again. This time – gasp – it's five purple bolts and one green bolt. Then it repeats. Hit the two green ones, they'll combine again and hit Cortex square in the face.

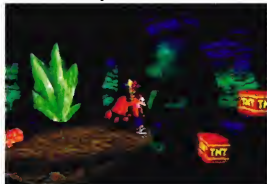
After he's been hit for the fourth time, he'll start throwing nothing but green bolts in your direction. Very foolish. Spin one last green bolt back at him and he's dead. You've finished the game! Now you'll get a big hug from the lovely Tawna and the credits will begin to roll.

As you can imagine, they're not very exciting, but if you complete the game with all 26 Gems and all the coloured ones in your pocket, you can now check out the secret hidden bits of the game. Which, surprisingly enough, are revealed below...

THE SECRETS...

BONUS ROUNDS

To gain access to the game's two hidden levels, you need to get hold of the two Cortex keys. To do this, you need to complete both of the two Cortex bonus rounds without dying – which isn't all that easy.



GEMS

There are two different types of Gem in Crash Bandicoot; the clear ones and the coloured ones. There are 26 gems in total, one for each of the levels. You must obtain a perfect score on each level to get the gems. You can only do that by completing a level without dying and remembering to smash every crate you come across – excluding the ones found in the

Bonus rounds. Most of the Gems you'll obtain will be a the clear variety, but you also need to get the six coloured ones.

You need the coloured Gems to gain access to the hidden sections of the game – if you don't have them, you can't get in there. A fine example of this can be found on the Jungle Rollers level. As you approach the wall of crates near the first checkpoint, you'll be able to see a small green Gem floating about. As you go near it, it will disappear.

If you return to this level after bagging the green Gem, you'll find the small green floating Gem is now a massive floating green Gem. If you hop on it, it'll take you up into the hidden section of the game, allowing you to grab the three hidden crates and get the perfect score you require.

So basically, collect the coloured Gems and go back to the levels where you failed to score a perfect. Now re-do the level, and finally get the perfect score. Hurrah!



The clear Gems however, are a different kettle of fish altogether. These become available throughout the game, but only really appear in their proper state in the final level – The Great Hall. For every clear Gem you have already collected, a clear Gem stepping stone will appear in The Great Hall. If you get all 20 of the clear gems whilst playing, you can access the top secret, and very special indeed, end sequence. What a thrill that is.

COLOURED GEMS

Here I'm going to take you through each of the coloured gems in order and show you where to head back to on the other islands in order for you to receive 'perfects' on every level of the game. Here we go...

JUNGLE ROLLERS – GREEN GEM

Make your way through the level and head for the first checkpoint. Jump on the huge green Gem and stay on it as it carries you upwards into the hidden section of the level. Jump off the Gem onto the arrow box on the right-hand side and try and leap over onto the three smaller green

Gems. Now jump up and smash the three extra life crates. Finish the level as normal and you've got your 'perfect'.



THE GREAT GATE – YELLOW GEM

Make your way through the level, in fact go right to the end. See those huge yellow Gems? Good, jump on 'em and hop over the teleporter to the left. Keep walking left and climb up the ledges you'll find there. Jump on the arrow box and bounce skywards. Smash the crate on the right as you bounce.

Get on the ledge at the top and head right until you reach the flytrap sitting next to an arrow crate. Jump on the flytrap, onto the arrow crate and hop over the fence. You should find an extra life there. Get back into the foreground now and break the arrow crate, before moving right heading for the two crates. smash the normal one and use the arrow crate to bounce over the fence again.



Keep heading right, collecting the fruit as you go and you'll eventually come to a halt. Something will be stopping your progress, spin into it. Keep going right and grab a few more pieces of fruit and then head back the way you came. Jump back into the foreground and smash the arrow crate. Now go to the right, off the flaming torch thang and get rid of the shield-carrying native with a well timed spin to his face.

Now continue to the right, avoiding the natives and flaming torches as you go, until you get to the far right-hand side of the level. From here, make your way up the three spinning log ledges, and break all the crates on the right. all that's left to do now is leap headfirst into the teleporter exit and guess what? Yep, you've got another 'perfect' score to add to your ever-growing tally. ▶

► **UPSTREAM – ORANGE GEM**

You need to get yourself up to just before the second checkpoint on this one – just where that moss-covered hill is. Walk to the left of the hill and onto the orange Gem below. Now walk up until you reach a line of Gems going under the hill. Walk along it, grab the extra life under there and get back on the hill. Now complete the rest of the level, right up to the teleporter.

Before you make that final leap though, jump right onto the other orange Gem. This will carry you up to another Gem. Jump on it and then ride the floating leaves upstream and get over the flytraps ahead. With a bit of luck, there should be another teleporter. Hit it and you've scored yet another 'perfect'.



ROLLING STONES – BLUE GEM

Play through the level until you get to that gap with the floating blue Gem in it. Jump on it and you'll be carried down to a secret area. Head forward and open all the crates in there and then go back and get on the Gem which will take you back to the level. Get to the teleporter intact and another 'perfect' will be yours. You're getting good at this.



NATIVE FORTRESS – RED GEM

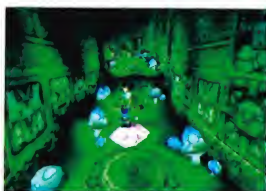
Go through the level, right up to where the red Gem is hovering next to one of those flaming torches. Get on the Gem and let it take you up to the other Gems. There's an arrow crate there as well. Bounce up off the crate, onto and off the other arrow crates knocking about until you see an extra life floating by a little fluffy cloud. Grab the extra life and jump right along the edge of the cloud – which will make two crates appear. Break them.



Another extra life will be waiting on the right-hand side, bounce off it and steer yourself left, back onto the cloud. Keep going upwards and bounce off the arrow crate into a large stack of bouncy crates. Once done, go left and down the staircase of red Gems. Finish the rest of the level and you've got another bloody 'perfect'. I don't believe it!

BOULDER DASH – PURPLE GEM

Run like the clappers and get right up to the teleporter. Jump on top of the massive oversized purple Gem on the left and it'll carry you down into a cosmic-looking underground tunnel. Walk forwards and jump over the gap and then bounce off the two crates and collect the extra lives. Now get over the next gap and they'll be a fly trap snapping at you just up ahead.



Jump on top of him (don't spin or you'll break the arrow crate you need to smash the floating crate) and destroy all the other crates. Now all you have to do is dive into the teleporter and you've earned another stunning perfect score. Smart arse.

ROAD TO NOWHERE – RED GEM

On this level, you need to get to the third checkpoint along. From here, get on the big red Gem and it'll take you off to the right. When it stops, keep jumping right until you get to a solid ledge with a TNT crate and one of those '!' boxes on it. Go right and headbutt the next TNT crate from underneath. As it blows up, go left and bounce off the normal crate and spin into the '!' box without setting off the TNT.

Now go right and bounce off the crate and onto the ledge of metal boxes. Stand on the middle one and jump up. Now hit the '!' crate. A stack of four crates will appear. Collect these and go

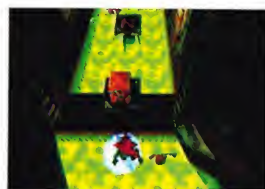
back to the left. Hit the TNT from below and step back as it destroys the other crates. Now, go back to the left and get on the red Gem. This will take you back to the bridge.



If you walk forwards, a plank will appear under your feet. Take a jump forwards and two more planks will appear. Land on these and keeping making big jumps up screen. More planks will appear and stop you falling to your death and eventually a ledge will come into sight. Collect the two extra lives from the ledge and go back to the teleporter. Yep, a perfect score once again.

CORTEX POWER – BLUE GEM

Use the guide to get you through the bulk of the level until you get to the blue pipe with a crate sitting on each side. Go down the left-hand side of the pipe, avoiding the toxic waste and jump past the two spiky floating robots. Keep going, right the way down to the left/right fork in the path, where there's a blue Gem on the left. Get on the Gem and let it take you forwards through the mask crate.



Go back to the fork and go down the right-hand side, right up to the second checkpoint. Carry on making your way through the level, but stop when you reach the blue pipe (the one with the arrow and bouncy crates just up ahead). Go around the left-hand side of the pipe and wait for a blue Gem to appear. Get on it and you'll be carried down to a set of electrified blue and red pillars. Step off the Gem and jump past the two pillars and then continue downwards through the level.

Get past the tiny pool of toxic waste and stop when you reach the bigger pool with the spiked robot flying about. Now walk onto the small ledge and wait for the robot to glide to the left. When

he does, jump down and continue through the level. Jump over the red pillar and you'll eventually come across a bridge made of normal crates and the nasty TNT ones. Detonate the TNT (which will destroy all the others) and then finish off the rest of the level. Hit the teleporter and another perfect is yours.

LIGHTS OUT – YELLOW GEM

Remember those swinging blades from the last time you were here? Good, get yourself up to the second one and you'll see the yellow Gem floating in the gap. Jump on it and you're heading skywards again, right the way up to a small ledge with three crates on it. Break the crates and hit the teleporter for one of the most easiest perfects ever scored. Lucky git.



CASTLE MACHINERY – GREEN GEM



Technically, you don't actually need the green Gem to score a 'perfect' here, but you can play the level as normal and then rack up over 30 extra lives. Start the level and get on the green Gem. As usual, it'll take you up to a tunnel filled with loads of floating extra lives. Collect all 27 and step back onto the green Gem. Let it float back down to the teleporter and you've got another really easy finish – but not a perfect score. You can however, return here whenever you want and rack up all those lovely lives again and again – which is nice.

JAWS OF DARKNESS – BLUE GEM

Play through the level until you spot the blue Gem. Get on it and you'll go down this time onto a ledge with loads of crates dotted about. Smash them all and the two metal boxes will join. Jump off these and hit the hidden crate hovering above. Now jump down

and across the blue floating Gems onto another ledge. Kill the blue snake that pops up and grab the mask crate. Jump to the left, using the blue Gems as your bridge and get on the next solid ledge. Collect the other mask crate and then jump up and left to find another ledge absolutely rammed with crates.



Break each and every one of them and when done, jump forwards onto the next ledge with three crates on it. Break the bottom one (which contains an extra life in) and then jump up and smash the other extra life crate. Then quickly leap to the right and get onto the floating Gems before that TNT crate explodes in your face.

Once on the next ledge, jump up and grab the floating extra life. Now you need to jump to the right to return to the main bulk of the level, just where you started all this blue Gem business. A quick jog through the rest of the level and you're home and dry with another perfect score under your belt.

HIDDEN LEVELS

Once you have collected the two Cortex keys after completing the two Cortex bonus rounds, you can play the two hidden levels of the game: The Whole Hog and Fumbling In The Darkness. Of course, you'll be needing a helpful guide to get you through these last two tricky levels of fun, so I've given you one. So to speak. Ahem...

THE WHOLE HOG

This level is just the same as Hog Wild – you'll need to practise like mad to learn all the turns and jumps necessary to get to the teleporter. Alternatively, get a pal to shout the instructions at you as you tear through the level, strapped to the back of a squealing piggy. Right, are you listening? Are you sitting comfortably? Then I'll begin...



Get on the hog, go left, right, left, jump, right, jump again and go left round the native. Hit the checkpoint and go right, over the pit and jump into the drum. Jump into the next drum, under the rotating piggy and then under the next rotating hog. Now go right past the next obstacle, left around the native, over the next rotating pig and onto the drum. Hit the next checkpoint.

Go left then left round the native and right around the next. Jump on the drum and go under the oncoming rotating pig. Hop on the next drum and go right around the next native and it's a short sprint to the teleporter. Yep, you've guessed – perfect!



FUMBLING IN THE DARKNESS

Start the level, hit the mask crate and head down the tunnel. Go through the door into the next room and leap either left or right as the trapdoor opens, to land on the thin ledges to the side of the tunnel. Collect the three crates and keeping jumping downwards into the next room. Collect all the crates in there and head off back to the start of the level.

From here, go forwards and hop over the green ledges to the first mask crate. Next up there's a couple of green ones to get over and some brown ones. These take you to the next mask crate. Keep heading forwards and you'll eventually come to a set of swinging blades and some more of those pesky rats. Kill the rodents and go right on up to the edge of the ledge. Now wait until the brown ledge to move towards you and the blade is swinging away from you before you make the jump onto the ledge.



There's one more jump before you get the next mask crate, and then a series of green ledges with blades to jump across. Stand and wait on the green ledges as long as you can before making the

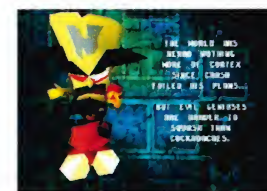
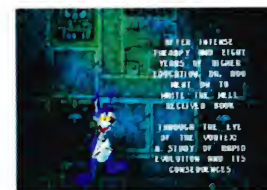
jump onto the next one. Eventually you'll reach the checkpoint. Thank god. Now move on up to the next section which is full of small thin ledges and plenty of swinging blades of doom. Keep hopping down the level, spin into the three spiders and then kill the massive spider that pops down to say hello.

Continue on, past some more blades and into the next mask crate and then bounce off the next load of spiders to get yourself over the huge gaps in the floor. Keep battling through the level and after a bit, your mask light will fade.

You need to spin into a rat, which will then fly into the mask crate ahead and relight your fire, so to speak. Another spider lies up ahead, simply kill it and hit the second checkpoint. Now there's a set of three spiders to bounce across, followed by a small ledge and then it's teleport time. Perfect score? You betcha!



Erm... that's it. You've finally completed the platform game of the year and what a joyride it was, eh? Now you can sit back and enjoy the end sequence, read the credits and slowly begin to fall asleep in your armchair. Rest easy now, you've earned it my little daring Bandicoot. Until the next time... HA! HA! HA! etc

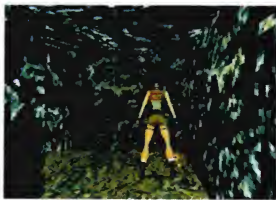


Tomb Raider

the secrets

After last month's complete walk through the only thing missing was the secret locations where extra ammo and health is located. So here they all are explained so that every important nook and cranny has now been seen

THE CAVES



First secret

From where you begin, run forward, following the animal tracks in the snow, until you come to a section of the cave that has vertical notches in the walls. Walk carefully past the dart trap and take the right turn in the path ahead. Run forward until Lara automatically looks up. Continue forward, past the circular rock, into the large cavern. Go to the left corner of the room and look up. You will see an opening up high, in the rock. Stand next to the rock, below the opening and jump backwards. Immediately jump forward and grab onto the ledge. Climb up into the opening. Enter the secret room and grab the Small Medi Pack.



Second secret

From where you begin, run forward, following the animal tracks in the snow, until you come to a section of the cave that has vertical notches in the walls. Walk carefully past the dart trap and take the right turn in the path ahead. Run forward until Lara automatically looks

up. Climb the cliffs to the top. Run forward until you reach a junction in the path. Turn left and run forward until you reach a snow lined wall. Turn right and you will see some snow piled up next to a wall. Run to the corner and climb up the wall into a secret area. Shoot the bat around the corner, and grab the Small Medi Pack.



Third secret

From where you saved your game, walk to either wall and look down into the pit. Shoot the bear, then drop into the pit. Enter the doorway and shoot the two bats. Go around the corner and grab the Small Medi Pack. Now walk onto the floor switch and scramble through the door before it closes. Return to the pit and jump over to the

other side. Keep going forward, into a room with a mossy doorway. Search the area to the left of the staircase and grab the Small Medi Pack in the darkness. Enter the doorway and shoot the two wolves in the room. Climb down to the bottom of the room, and if you search carefully, you will find another Small Medi Pack. Walk to the staircase across from the Medi Pack and climb up onto it. Follow the staircase and activate the switch at the top to open the door to your left. Jump to the small ledge, and immediately jump again and pull yourself up. Walk to

the large moss-free spot on the wall and look left. Jump across to the small ledge and enter the secret room. Grab the Large Medi Pack.

CITY OF VILCABAMA



First secret

From where you begin, run forward, into the large room, and shoot the four wolves. Run into the corridor directly across from the double doors in the room. Run forward, shooting the wolf, until you come to two doorways. Enter the doorway on the far side of the room, in the right-hand corner. Run through the corridor and shoot the three bats. Continue forward, past the left path, and shoot the wolf around the

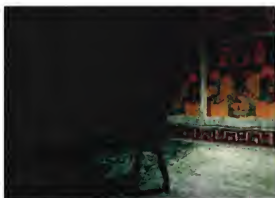


corner. Go forward into the room and grab the Small Medi Pack in the bushes. Run straight ahead and shoot the four bats in the area just past the path. Turn around and run forward. Take the right path into a huge room with a pool of water. Dive in the pool and swim down into the tunnel. Take the right path and follow the tunnel into a large underwater room full of pillars. Turn left and swim around the corner. Pull the lever on the wall then swim back into the tunnel. Swim straight ahead and take the second tunnel on the left. Swim to the surface and climb out of the water. Run through the open door and enter the secret room. Grab the Magnum Clips and the Small Medi Pack.



Second secret

For the second secret dive into the pool again. Take the right path and follow the tunnel into a large underwater room full of pillars. Swim forward and to the right, toward a lit area. Pull the lever on the wall and swim straight up, through a new hole. Climb out into a secret room and grab the Small Medi Pack.

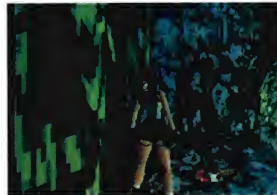


Third secret

From the second save beacon, drop down the ledges to the ground. Enter the middle door and proceed carefully down the hallway, past the scythe trap. Pull the switch in the small room you come to, and you will fall into a pool of water. Swim down and enter the small tunnel in the wall. Follow the tunnel and climb out of the water into a small room. Pull the switch in the room and go through the window to the right of the switch. Jump into the pool, then swim straight up, and climb out of the water. Shoot the bear and walk into the opening to the left of the locked door. You'll enter a room with a switch. Enter the opening in the wall, in the

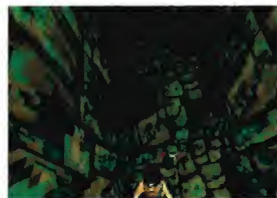
opposite corner from the switch, to find the secret room. Grab the Uzi Clips.

THE LOST VALLEY



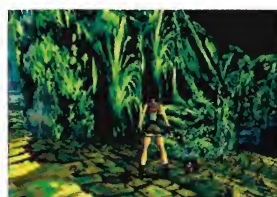
First secret

From where you begin, run forward and jump into the river. After you fall down the waterfall, climb out of the water and shoot the two wolves. Enter the cave across from the waterfall and shoot the wolf around the corner. Continue through the cave to some white rocks. Climb up the white rock to the top. Grab the Large Medi Pack then run forward and slide down to the grass below. Shoot the Raptor then run around the corner into the valley. Shoot another Raptor and continue forward, underneath the broken bridge. Get ready for the fight of your life as a T-Rex stomps around the corner and comes after you! Shoot the T-Rex, then continue forward to two waterfalls. Climb up to the ledge to the right of the right waterfall. Enter the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells.



Second secret

After shooting the T-Rex continue forward to two waterfalls. Walk up to the rocky ledge between the two waterfalls and climb up two ledges. Jump up and right to a third ledge. Jump up and grab the ledge above you. While still hanging from the ledge, shuffle to the right until you are just right of the center of the waterfall. Pull yourself up into the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells and Uzi Clips.



Third secret

From the first Save Beacon, leave the temple and run along the left side of the valley. Look for a section of the wall near the area where you killed the Raptors. Climb up to the first ledge. Turn left and jump to the second ledge. Turn left a bit and jump to the third ledge. Now make a big jump to the fourth ledge. Finally, make a huge jump onto the roof of the temple to find the secret area. Now grab the Large Medi Pack, Magnum Clips, Uzi Clips, and Shotgun Shells.



Fourth secret

From the third Save Beacon, run across the rope bridge and face the Machine. Hold the Action button and step backward off the ledge to the left of the rope bridge. While still hanging to the ledge, shuffle to the left and drop onto a rock. Run up and left around the corner and enter the secret room with a Large Medi Pack.



Fifth secret

From the third Save Beacon, jump into the water and swim down into a tunnel. Follow the tunnel all the way to the secret room, and grab the Shotgun Shells and the Small Medi Pack.

TOMB OF QUALOPEC



First secret

From the second Save Beacon, run through the room with idols and avoid the dart traps. Before you get to the staircase, turn left and position yourself to the left of

the dart pipe. Climb up to the ledge above you and into a room. Run through the room to the left-hand corner. Grab the Shotgun Shells.



Second secret

Go to the same room as the first secret. Fall backward off the ledge where the Shotgun Shells were and grab onto it. Shuffle to the outside corner and drop down into the spikes. WALK through the spikes, not run, and grab the Magnum Clips.



Third secret

From the third Save Beacon, jump into the water at the end of the tunnel. Swim along the walls at the bottom and enter the small tunnel. Follow the tunnel all the way into a secret room. Grab the Large Medi Pack, and the Magnum Clips.

THE MOANASTERY ST FRANCIS' FOLLY



First secret

From where you begin, immediately run to the right and jump onto the wall. Walk to the end of the ledge and shoot the two lions. Run straight ahead to the block with a symbol on the floor behind it. Pull the block onto the symbol and a door will open up high. Push the block forward twice and a door will open down low. Push the block forward one more time. Run around the block and enter the temple door. Shoot the two apes and pull the switch across from the door. Walk onto the stairs to the right of the door and shoot a third ape that

► appears. Continue up the stairs and pull another switch at the top to open a door that leads out of the area. Run outside and shoot the adventurer the same as you did for Larson. After he runs away, climb onto the block you pushed earlier. Run and jump to the next column. Jump again to the next column and grab the Large Medi Pack. Turn left and jump to the low column. Now jump to the door. Position yourself just inside the doorway, standing on the strip of arrows. Side-step to the right until you are against the sloping wall. Jump to the right then immediately jump to the left, and quickly jump up and grab onto the ledge. Pull yourself up and face the small sloping ledge. Back up and jump forward onto the ledge. Immediately jump backward onto a higher slope, then jump forward and grab onto the highest ledge. Pull yourself up into the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells and the Large Medi Pack.

Second secret

After collecting the Large Medi Pack from the top of the pillar as in the last secret run and jump to the brick ledge against the far left wall. Jump along the ledges to a door. Enter the door and follow the hallway to a sloping pit. Fall into the pit so that you are facing forward. Just before you reach the end of the slide, jump into the air to land on a small ledge. Quickly jump across to the doorway and pull yourself up. Enter the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells and the Small Medi Pack.



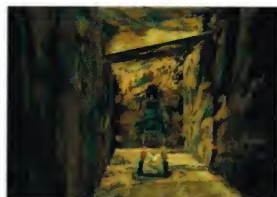
Third secret

Follow secret one up to collecting the Large Medi Pack. Now, run and jump to the brick ledge against the far left wall. Jump along the ledges to a door. Enter the door and follow the hallway to a sloping pit. Fall into the pit so that you are facing forward. Slide down the pit and drop into the water. Swim forward and up through the first hole. Climb up into the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells.

Fourth secret

From the first Save Beacon, make a running jump across to the ledge in the middle of the room. Shoot the bats in the ceiling. Drop down to the next ledge below you, then drop again to the next ledge below. Pull the switch to open Thor's door. Turn right and jump across to the gray square on the ledge. Turn right and run to the edge of the platform. Roll just before the edge and drop down. Roll and run forward. Roll again at the edge and drop down to a ledge. Run forward and shoot the two bats. Drop off the ledge to the ground. Run through the door before it closes and enter the secret room. Grab the Large Medi Pack and the Magnum Clips.

THE COLOSSEUM



First secret

From where you begin, run to the right and jump into the water. Climb onto the ledge and shoot the croc. Swim past the dead croc and climb up out of the water. Shoot the two lions guarding the temple. Enter the temple and run up the stairs. Shoot a third lion, then return outside. Run all the way down the left side of the temple. Climb up the rock ledges and jump across to the temple. Turn right and run forward along the ledge and grab the Large Medi Pack. Go all the way back around the ledge and climb up onto the block. Jump straight up and climb to the next ledge. Follow the ledge around the temple again to the end. Jump diagonally to the right, over to a ledge near a door. Walk past the door and slide down the slope. Jump forward when you reach the bottom to a small ledge. Run and jump to the opening in the wall just to the left of the water. Enter the secret room and grab the Shotgun Shells.



Second secret

Enter the door you walked past in the last secret after jumping diagonally to a ledge and walk to the edge of a pit. Shoot the two crocs then turn to face the wall. Jump and grab the crevice in the wall, then shuffle to the right. Pull yourself up and enter the secret area with the Shotgun Shells.

Third secret

From the second Save Beacon, run forward through the door and climb up the long series of ledges. Turn left and run up the ramp. Climb up the ledge and grab the Shotgun Shell to your right. Walk back to the rocks and turn to face the rock slide. Run and jump to the rocks then jump to the first solid step of the Colosseum. Turn left and make a running jump to the ledge. Shoot the two apes and run past the bedchamber into the next chamber. Pull the block backward twice and run into the tunnel behind it. Grab the Small Medi Pack and pull the switch. Leave the bedchamber room and return to the end of the ledge. Jump across to the solid stair, then hop backward and slide to the ground. Turn right and run around the rocks to a block-shaped ledge. Climb up to the ledge above and run up the staircase. Enter the door to your right and shoot the two bats. Run into the lit hallway and run around the corner. When the gate slams shut behind you, roll into the pit and grab the ledge as another boulder rumbles past you. Climb out of the pit and jump to the other side. Run up the slope and pull the switch. Run around the corner and slide down into the dark room. Run through the left door and out onto the steps above the Colosseum floor. Walk to the lowest step and shoot the cougar. Continue forward and shoot the adventurer yet again. Run forward, up some steps, and enter the door. Run forward into a lit chamber. Walking around the left pillar will trigger a door to open at the top of the room. Walk to the left pillar and stand just to the right of it. Run forward and jump onto the right edge of the block. Side-jump to the right, then jump backward. Now side-jump left and jump forward to the top ledge. Pull yourself up and enter the door into the secret room. Grab the two Large Medi Packs, the Uzi Clips, and your second new weapon, the Magnums. It's as simple as that.

THE PALACE MIDAS



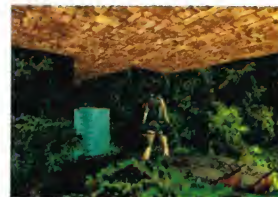
First secret

From the third Save Beacon, walk forward and shoot the apes and bats in the room. Jump across to the pool and dive in. Swim forward into the trench. When you see the two crocs, turn around and climb up onto a ledge. Shoot the crocs and swim down the trench to the end. Climb out of the water and onto the rocks to the right. Walk forward to the edge. Make two jumps forward in a row to the corner. Turn left and run forward into the secret area with the Magnum Clips and the Small Medi Pack.



Second secret

Jump across to the pool as you did in the previous secret but instead of diving in turn around. Go to the left corner and look down. Drop down into the secret area and grab the Shotgun Shells, Small Medi Pack, and the Uzi Clips.



Third secret

From the fifth save beacon, return to the garden and run into the corner to the right of the entrance gate. Shuffle to the right, behind the tree, and pull the hidden switch. It's well hidden and you can't see it but it's definitely there. Turn right and enter the gate into the secret area. Walk forward until you are just in front of the metal slicers. Wait for the slicers to slam shut, then jump forward as they begin to open. Grab the Shotgun Shells, Small Medi Pack and Magnum Clips.

THE CISTERN

First secret

From the first save beacon, turn right and jump over to the ledge. Run forward and go up the staircase. Shoot the adventurer and run to the right. Climb onto the wall on the right side of the room. Turn right and hop over to the ledge. Turn left and jump up and grab the next ledge. Climb up and grab the Small Medi Pack. Turn right and run up the ramp. Turn left and climb up the wall into a dark area. Climb up to the top into a secret area. Grab the Shotgun Shells.

Second secret

From the fourth save beacon, jump into the water and swim through the door. Grab the second Silver Key and swim back to the main chamber. Climb out of the water and go to the right-hand door. Use a Rusty Key to open the door. Enter the door and jump into the water. Swim down into the tunnel and grab the Small Medi Pack and the Gold Key. Swim through the gate and back into the main chamber. Climb out of the water and shoot the croc. Dive in again and face the two doors. Dive down and slightly to the right and look for a narrow tunnel. Enter the secret tunnel and grab the Magnum Clips.

Third secret

After shooting the croc in the last secret you shouldn't enter the water you should now climb up the staircase with the guardrails to a locked door. Turn left and push the block into the wall. Enter the secret room and jump up to the ledge. Grab the Large Medi Pack and the two Magnum Clips.

THE TOMB OF TIHOCAN



First secret

From the first save beacon, shoot the adventurer if he appears and walk to the swinging blade. Jump to the ledge behind the blade and grab the Shotgun Shells. Jump back to the ledge and make a running jump onto the pillar. Turn

and face the door and jump over to it. Shoot the adventurer, again, until he runs away. Run down the staircase to a slicer. Jump past the slicer and continue down the staircase. Shoot the croc in the pit then drop down. Run down the staircase into a room and grab the Magnum Clips and two Shotgun Shells. Step on the three tiles on the floor with the slightly different textures to open the secret door. Enter the door then turn around to face the door. Jump left and hold the jump button to make a series of jumps to the top. Grab the Large Medi Pack and the Shotgun Shells.

Second secret

From the third save beacon, jump onto the right side of the slope. Hold the Jump button and Up to make a series of jumps into a hidden tunnel. Follow the tunnel into a room with collapsing platforms. To get to the other side, walk to the edge and turn so that Lara's right side is facing the room. Now, make standing jumps right, forward, right, right, back, and right to reach the secret room. Grab the Uzi Clips and the Magnum Clips.

EGYPT THE CITY OF KAHMOON

First secret

From the second save beacon, walk forward and shoot the croc. Drop down off the ledge and run into the hallway below to grab a Large Medi Pack. Return to the chamber and run up the ramp to make a boulder roll down at you. Jump out of the way and run over to the boulder. Turn right and run forward to the dark entrance. Climb up the ledges and jump across to the secret room. Grab the Large Medi Pack and the Magnum Clips.

Second secret

From the third save beacon, turn left and jump to the ledge below the door. Pull yourself up and run up the staircase into the room. Climb up to the tunnel and pull the switch at the end. Return to the Save Beacon and pull the block away from the Beacon twice. Now pull the block once along the ledge near the water. Jump over the block and push it forward once. Climb up the block and jump across to a ledge with a block on it. Push the block forward and shoot the mummified

cat. Enter the room and pull the switch. Return to the block and pull it backward twice. Now climb up and jump across to the golden ledge. Jump up into the hole above you and pull the switch in the next room. Run toward the silver gong and jump across the far ledge. Turn right and jump to the rocky ledge. Walk to the end of the ledge and grab the Magnum Clips. Turn left and slide down the slope to a ledge. Grab the Small Medi Pack and turn right. Run and jump to the paw of the Sphinx. Turn left and jump over to the greenish ledge. Turn right and run up the slope and jump over to the high ledge. Pull yourself up into the secret area and grab the Uzi Clips.

Third secret

From the fourth save beacon, look down and shoot the panthers. Walk around and jump over to the Magnum Clip on the ledge. What ever you do, don't pull the switch around the corner, or you will not be able to enter the third secret area. Drop down to the dark floor and shoot some more panthers. Enter the two lit hallways and grab the Large Medi Packs. Run to the back of the room and look up. Against the wall, to the right side of the bridge is a small ledge hidden in the shadows. Climb up onto the ledge then turn left and jump to the bridge. Run across the bridge to the middle ledge and walk onto the left side of the ledge. Shoot the panthers below you and make a running jump into the secret alcove in the corner. Grab the Shotgun Shells.

THE OBELISK OF KAHMOON

First secret

From the third save beacon, turn around and enter the door. Turn left and jump to the fenced ledge. Follow the path and grab the Ankh. Return to the ledge and go forward, past the door. Grab the Large Medi Pack and pull the switch at the top of the stairs. Climb back down the stairs and turn left. Enter the door into a new room. Run up the large staircase and turn right at the top. Run and jump to a crevice in the wall. Shuffle to the right and drop down to the ledge. Walk around the corner and drop to the ledge below. Run forward into a hallway and pull the switch. Return outside and climb up the

stairs to the right. Shoot the mummy panther and pull the switch next to the gong to lower a third bridge. Grab the Small Medi Pack and run around the corner and pull the next switch. Enter the door and run down the stairs. Walk past the pillars to the end of the ledge. Run and jump across to the secret stone pillar. Grab the Small Medi Pack and the Uzi Clips.

Second secret

Run and jump across to the stone pillar which had a Small Medi Pack and Uzi clips on in the last secret. Now look down for a white gong on the end of a ledge. Run and jump to the secret gong and grab the Large Medi Pack and two Uzi Clips.

Third secret

From the gong which had the Large Medi Pack and two Uzi Clips in the last secret turn right and drop to the ledge below. Turn left and enter the doorway with the green ledge. Climb the staircase to the top and grab onto the edge of the wall. Shuffle to the right and pull yourself up to the ledge above. Turn right and jump up to the ledge with a column. Enter the secret tunnel and grab the Large Medi Pack and Magnum Clips.

THE SANCTUARY OF THE SCION

First secret

From the fourth save beacon, climb back to the top Ankh symbol and turn left. Slowly walk forward and right across the side of the head, until you can't walk any further. Look below you and find the gun clip that appears to float in mid air. Jump to the secret invisible platform and grab your third new weapon, the Uzi!!

THE LOST CITY NATLA'S MINES



First secret

From the second save beacon, use the Fuses in the slots to lower a cabin to the ground. Enter the cabin and grab the Pistols. ▶

► Climb onto the roof of the cabin and jump across into a tunnel. Jump and climb up to a ledge and run forward to open a gate elsewhere. When you come to a plank on the ground, turn around. Jump backward and slide down while holding the Action button. You will grab the edge of the hole that opens below you and not fall into the bubbling lava. Once the plank closes up, go to the wall and climb up to the next ledge into the secret area. Grab the Shotgun Clips and Uzi Clips.

Second secret

From the third save beacon, run into the next room and shoot the creep who has your Magnums. Take your Magnums back! Max out your lifeline and then line yourself up with the switch on the far wall. Make a running jump over to it, but let go of the Jump button as soon as you jump. You will fall down the cliff and grab the ledge below you. As you slide

down the cliff, grab the crevice and shuffle to the right. Drop onto the ledge and turn right. Run through the tunnel to a lava-filled chamber. Jump to the ledge in the lava. Turn left and make a jump to the next pillar. Jump again to a second pillar. Turn right and jump across to a tunnel entrance. Immediately run forward and push the crate forward before you are crushed by a boulder. Pull the same block out again and climb up onto it. Jump to the secret area and grab the Large Medi Pack and the Uzi Clips.

Third secret

From the fourth save beacon, run to the top of the hill and climb up to the ledge. Jump over to the sloped ledge to the right. Wait for a boulder to roll out of the tunnel, then jump over to it. Follow the tunnel all the way and pull the switch. Grab the Magnum Clips and return to the TNT room. Turn left from the blocks and enter the new hole in the wall. Take out the skateboarding freak and grab your Uzis from his dead hands! Grab the three Uzi Clips in the room, then find the hole in the ground with water and dive in. Follow the tunnel through the gate and enter the secret area. Grab the Large Medi Pack, Small Medi Pack, and the Uzi Clips.

ATLANTIS



First secret

From where you begin, run forward and a sphere on your left will explode. Shoot the creature that comes out. Turn around and walk toward the sphere on the right. Take care of this creature as well. Run forward along the trench and a third sphere will explode. Destroy this creature like you did the rest. Face the middle door and turn left. Run through the side door and climb the staircase to the webbed floor. Run to the center bridge and grab the Shotgun Shells. Shoot the flying demon, then run into the far-right corner on the webbed floor. Enter the alcove

and pull the switch. Turn around and run forward into another alcove. Pull the second switch. Now run back to the other side of the room and enter a new doorway. Run down the stairs and pull a third switch. Return to the entrance chamber and enter the middle door. Shoot the flying demon and run forward to the edge. Drop off the ledge to the ledge below. Enter the secret tunnel and grab the Large Medi Pack, Magnum Clips and the Uzi Clips.

Second secret

From the first save beacon, jump over to the pillar. Turn left and jump to the lowest ledge on the pyramid slope. Quickly jump to the next ledge. Turn right and jump to a third ledge and slide down. Climb up the ledges to the secret area in the upper-right corner. Grab the Large Medi Pack, Magnum Clips and Uzi Clips.

Third secret

From the fifth save beacon, jump to the ledge in the corner and pull the switch. Return to the lava room and jump back to the entrance ledge. Turn left and jump to the pillar. Turn left and jump to the second pillar. Now, jump across to the doorway in the wall. Climb up and pull the switch at the end of the tunnel. Return to the tunnel entrance and jump to the left pillar. Leap across the pillars and enter the tunnel. Follow the tunnel into a long hallway. Run into the corner of the room to set off a hidden pressure plate. Immediately turn left and run up the hill, blasting the creatures, and enter the secret alcove. You only get one chance at this room, so load up a previous game if you blow it. Grab the Large Medi Pack and the Uzi Clips.

THE GREAT PYRAMID

First secret

From the first save beacon, run past the slicer and follow the tunnel. Turn right at the intersection and push the block forward once. Return to the intersection and turn right. Run past the red door and drop into the next room. Pull the block backward once, then turn around and climb back into the tunnel. Turn left, go down, and push the block forward once. Return to the

and pull the switch. Turn around and run into the next room. Turn right and jump to the dark ledge. Jump to a second and a third dark ledge. Turn around and jump all the way back to the secret bridge. Run across the bridge and grab the Large Medi Pack, Magnum Clips, and the Shotgun Shells.

Second secret

From the second save beacon, shoot the Scion until it blows up. Turn and run through the door. Shoot the three creatures then hang and drop through the hole against the wall. Turn around and jump across to the crevice. Shuffle to the right and drop down the slope. Jump at the bottom of the slope to avoid the lava. Enter the door in the next room. Walk onto the right side of the hill and down to the bottom to trigger a boulder. Now, walk to the swinging blade and jump across to the ledge. Walk past the spikes to the middle of the ledge. Face the doorway and do a standing jump followed by a running jump to get to the door. Grab onto the crevice in the left-hand wall and shuffle to the right to the far ledge. Drop down into the secret area and grab the Large Medi Pack and Uzi Clips.

Third secret

From the third save beacon, turn right and jump down into the tunnel. Run forward across the three collapsing ledges and run into the tunnel behind the swinging blade. Turn right and enter the hallway. Run down the slope and outrace the boulder. Jump over the boulder and grab the Small Medi Pack. Jump over the boulder again and turn right. Slide down the slope when the blade is on either side and jump from the end of the slope to the ledge. Drop down into the tunnel and run forward. Grab the Small Medi Pack and continue through the tunnel to a door. Pull the switch to open the door and go through. Turn right and grab the Uzi Clips. Turn around and run forward to the lava hole. Let the boulder roll over you, then jump across to the other side and grab onto the edge. Let a second boulder roll over you, then climb up and run forward into the next room. Jump across and grab onto the ledge behind the swinging blade. Pull yourself up and jump into the secret cave entrance to find a Large Medi Pack and two Uzi Clips.

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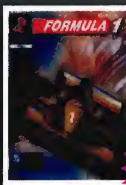
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Dear PlayStation Pro

I am wondering if there is anyone out there who can help me. I have had a Sony PlayStation ever since they came out.

As a puzzle game fanatic, I purchased DiscWorld as soon as it was available and guess what? I've been stuck on it ever since.

I have managed to get to what I think is approx. half way through act two. I have been round and round the map and through the City Gates but can't get any further and it feels as though I've been stuck in the same place forever.

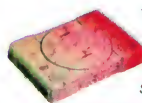
Have you any back issue magazines I can purchase that have the solution, or will there be any solutions published in any of your issues in the near future? If not, could you possibly help me out with these few things below?

How do you keep the octopus picture on the beam in the Broken Drum? Also, where is, who has and what is the sixth item of gold needed for the dragon?

I have found a gold tooth, chimney brush, trowel, chuckie's hat and belt buckle. I am having a hard time trying to find the sixth item. Please try and help - this is doing my head in! I want to buy part two, Missing Presumed, but would like to finish part one first. Your help will be greatly appreciated. Many thanks.

P.S. Great mag.

Allison Mensforth, Sunderland



The relevant back issues are on their way Allison. As the game is so deep and involved, we can't print the solutions again as they would take up too much space. We're also enclosing a solutions book for Discworld II so you can breeze through it when it comes out.

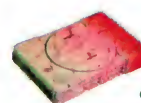
Dear PlayStation Pro

I've bought the first two issues of your mag and am going to continue purchasing them because it is a value for money, well laid out mag. But this letter is in response to your Gun Law article in the News section of issue 2.

I believe that if anybody was to ban the Predator because of the recent gun outcry, they would firstly have their fingernails plucked out one by one with a pair of pliers and then they should be strung up by their bollocks! They don't deserve anything less painful. Thanks for reading the letter and keep the great quality magazine going.

I particularly didn't want it banned as I am planning to purchase one with Die Hard Trilogy as I recently hired it and it was bloody brilliant. As for the gun-toting murderers in your article, they should firstly have their fingernails plucked out one by one with a pair of pliers and then they should be strung up by their bollocks! They don't deserve anything less painful. Thanks for reading the letter and keep the great quality magazine going.

G. Wood, Sudbury

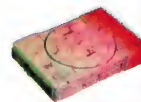


The news piece printed in issue two has stirred up a veritable hornet's nest, G. There's no need to use guns or violence of any kind, but if people go around inflicting pain on others they must be punished for it.

To PlayStation Pro

I have been entering every single competition in your magazines and still haven't won anything. I really wanted to win a PlayStation. In the past I have bought every single magazine of yours. I suggest that the people who write in should receive a prize. There is one thing about your magazines that I like - the competitions. Thank you.

Sukha, No address

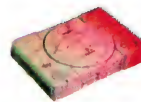


We receive competition entries and letters literally by the sackload Sukha. If we were to send PlayStations out to every single person who wrote in we'd soon go bust and there'd be no more PlayStation Pro. You wouldn't want that, would you?

Dear PlayStation Pro

I reckon gun-toting murderers should be stuck in a prison cell with just a Nintendo with one game, so they die of boredom. If not, stick 'em on an island with no food or drink.

Darryn Jenner, Sandwich



And why not?

Dear PlayStation Pro

Firstly, top marks on an excellent debut issue. I only just bought my PSX and as I browsed the racks for a magazine, I came across your issue one. The long reviews are really great and after playing the demo of Crash Bandicoot that came with my console it definitely goes on my 'must have' list. A subscription to your mag is also on the list once I finish paying for the console.

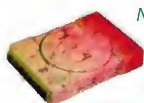
To help me make best use of my hardware I wondered if you could help me choose the best split-screen racer? I had Need For Speed on the 3DO and loved that, but are Andretti Racing or Penny Racers better? I already have ESPN Extreme but I'm now looking for something with real speed to challenge my flatmates. Sadly, we'll have to wait for a second PlayStation to enter the house to enjoy F1 with two players.

I laid out mag' magazine going'

One final question regarding PlayStation third party control pads: When my friend bought his PSX last year, Striker '96 wouldn't work with his Logic 3 pad. Is this a common problem or are only a few games affected? I paid the extra for an official pad to be on the safe side.

Thanks for your time. I don't know how you can beat issue one but give it a try. If you ever want reader reviewers, here's volunteer #1.

Neil Dane, Edinburgh



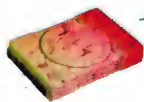
Need For Speed, PlayStation-style is better than both Andretti and Penny Racers (by some considerable distance in the case of the latter). We had the same problem with Striker '96, although that was an isolated case. We'll keep your name on file, Neil, if we decide to feature a readers' reviews section.

Dear PlayStation Pro

I have filled out your reader's survey and found it very exhilarating. I have many demo CDs in my collection at home which help me in future planning of game buying and I thought it might be a good idea to have a demo CD on your front cover.

I would be prepared to pay a little extra and these CDs are very important in helping me choosing a game as it helps to tell me what the game is really like. I would be obliged if you took this thought of mine into consideration. I would like to congratulate you on your magazine release – it was very interesting to read.

Thomas Gilford, No address



Just for you Thomas, seeing as you asked, we'll do a demo CD on our front cover. How's that?

Dear PlayStation Pro

I've got a problem, no not that kind, not the kind your girlfriend laughs at, but the kind all PlayStation games have (so I have found out) at around 10 months old. I know at least five people who have had to take their PSXs back for replacement coz it keeps jumping (see I do have mates).

I have had a chip put in mine so I can play import games so therefore have no warranty. I believe the problem of these PSXs breaking down is heat. Coz mine sometimes runs a bit faster if it's hot. Now, coz it's running hot this will shorten the life.

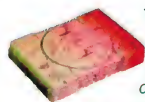
You must agree, if I can keep my PSX cooler, then it must last longer. So here are a few ideas of mine

and I would like your views please.

1. Drop it in a bucket of water
2. Get all your mates round with straws, ask them to sit around your PSX and blow on it
3. Smash it up and put it in a flask
4. Put it in the fridge
5. Stand it on some ice
6. Move to Greenland
7. Fix a fan on it

I believe the last is best. How about using a PC processor fan and wiring it in somewhere? If so, where and how?

S. J. Wagg, Blackpool



Tell you what S. J. Try suggestion number six, then apply suggestion number four to yourself, so you can chill out a bit. You'll find the world will be an altogether more peaceful, less surreal place. And stop using the word 'coz' all the time, or else you'll turn into a 'coz'monaut.

Dear PlayStation Pro

I was very impressed by the first issue of PlayStation Pro and was looking forward to the next. Having read the MKT review in issue two I can think of no good reason why I should bother buying the magazine any more.

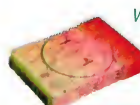
Whilst I appreciate that not everyone can like every game, and that a lot of people prefer the Streetfighter series of games to MK, I did expect the reviewers to highlight the differences between MK Trilogy and MK3. If I did not already own the game (import) and had not read other reviews, I would now be under the impression that MK Trilogy was the same as MK3 except with more characters.

For the record, these are the additions to this version (aside from being able to play all the characters from all the games): Two-on-two fights with no extra loading times during the game for the second characters. An eight player tournament, brutalities as a finishing move, the Aggressor Mode, You can now choose two characters that you want Shang Tsung to be able to morph into in a one-on-one fight. If you selecting any 'classic' ninja you are able to morph into all seven of the classic ninjas (the same goes for the cyber ninjas and the trio of Kitana, Mileena and Jade). Bosses are playable for the first time. Various extras options such as recharging energy bars and auto combos.

I accept that none of these would probably make a difference to your final score but it is your duty to inform readers that these features exist so they can make an informed decision as to whether they

should buy it or not. I am not some crazed MK fan that knows all the moves and insists that it gets full marks – I just happen to enjoy playing it. Please let me know if there is any point in buying your magazine in future.

Terra Ungomis, No address

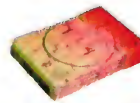


We've been looking for a reason to sack Dan ever since the day he joined. Although one bum review won't be enough justification to hand him his P45, you can rest assured that he'll be on the receiving end of more fatalities than friendship moves over the next few weeks. And yes, there's every point in buying PlayStation Pro in the future. It's written to cause a reaction and it worked in your case.

Dear PlayStation Pro

To access the further eight cars in Ridge Racer Revolution, use the cheat as in 'Buggy mode' pressing L1, R1, Select, Down and Triangle while it's loading, as soon as you've destroyed the fourth wave let go of the buttons and let off a couple of shots with the X button. You'll now have all 12 cars, which you can now save to your memory card.

Ian Dean, Banbury



Cheers Ian, there's nothing better than doing things in an underhand fashion.



PLAYSTATION PRO

RECOMMENDS

At the end of the day you only buy magazines so you don't waste money on one of the many sub-standard games already available on the PlayStation. And this is the part of PlayStation Pro that's guaranteed to steer you in the right direction. Every game available in every genre has been assessed and placed in rank order so you know exactly what's the best example of each game style

RACING G



1 F1 APPROVED

Comes out just about on top of a very tough category. As realistic as they come, this is as close as most of us will get to a Formula One car without having our personalities surgically removed first.



2 WipEout 2097

Fast enough to satisfy the speed junkies and colourful enough to please the acid casualties. It's more sexy than the original in every aspect – especially speed. Fun, fast, frantic and full of space cadets.



3 Motor Toon Grand Prix 2

Much more bizarre than many race games, this official Sony release is unmatched in the sheer exhilaration stakes. Outrageous courses and a cast of comedy characters make this a winner in anyone's book.

4 WipEout

Futuristic race game with the difficulty level turned right up to maximum. Fantastic graphics, speed and soundtrack plus an amazing feeling of satisfaction when you succeed, make the effort well worthwhile. One of the best early PlayStation releases – a must buy now it's been reduced.

5 Burning Road

This surprise offering from Funsoft shocked everyone by being (marginally) better than the much-hyped Ridge Racer. It moves as fast as most of its competitors, looks a treat and even has an air freshener that swings about realistically.

Also recommended

Destruction Derby
Ridge Racer Revolution
Need For Speed
Ridge Racer
Impact Racing
Andretti
Destruction Derby 2

SHOOT'EM-UP



1 Alien Trilogy

APPROVED

Acclaim managed to out-Doom Doom and released Alien Trilogy to thunderous praise from just about every magazine around. One of the eeriest, most atmospheric games you'll ever play, and top of the sizeable shoot'em-up pile by quite some distance.



2 Doom

Still an all-time classic game, despite the somewhat dated graphics engine having been surpassed by other companies. As far as level construction and excitement go, it's still difficult to come close to beating iD's effort.

3 Shellshock

Core's stylish tank-based shoot'em-up scored well on just about all counts. Utilising the same superb game engine as the almost equally impressive Thunderhawk 2, Shellshock provides a long lasting and varied challenge.

4 Krazy Ivan

There's far more to this than cheesy FMV sequences. Krazy Ivan is an office favourite and out of the early batch of releases this one probably still gets more play than any of the others.



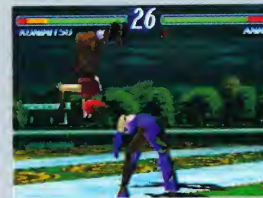
5 Final Doom

While it doesn't break any new ground in terms of gameplay, the massive levels will have you twisting and turning like there's no tomorrow. The puzzles are more complex and the atmosphere's a lot more extreme.

Also recommended

Soviet Strike
Descent
Bedlam
Disruptor
Loaded
Black Dawn
Agile Warrior

BEAT'EM-UP



1 Tekken 2 APPROVED

A bit predictable, admittedly, but there's no denying this game's addictive qualities, amazing graphics and just about perfect gameplay. The acid test is to get someone who hates fighting games, get them to play this for a bit and watch them be converted.



2 Star Gladiator

Quirky characters, awesome background scenery, amazing special moves and some of the most complex combo configurations known to man. It should send excitement shivers down the spines of all who play it.

3 Tekken

Namco's domination of this market is almost total, and you have to wonder, when you've got one of the Tekken games, why bother with anything else?

4 Mortal Kombat III

If we had a goriest beat'em-up category this would head the list. A more traditional style of game with some distinctly untraditional special moves. Tearing heads off with your bare hands isn't uncommon in MKIII, so don't say you weren't warned!



5 Battle Arena Toshinden 2

The pretender to the crown is basically a poor man's version of Tekken. Very similar to play, all Toshinden is lacking is a bit of spit and polish on the gameplay front. It's still great fun, however, although not quite the best in its genre.

Also recommended

Zero Divide
Street Fighter Alpha
Rise 2: Resurrection
Criticom
Primal Rage
JVC Victory Boxing
Darkstalkers
WWF Wrestlemania
Street Fighter Alpha 2



1 International Track & Field **APPROVED**

Possibly the most essential purchase to be released on the PlayStation so far. Fantastic multi-player fun, especially with the multi-tap, and an intriguing challenge for the solo player as you go all out for record times and distances.



2 Madden NFL '97

Without a doubt the best American Football game ever, on any gaming system. Stat levels are high but don't intrude on the excellent action that the game offers. Play it either seriously for a full season or just for a laugh in an exhibition game.

3 Olympic Soccer

It may not have the flashy motion capture of say, Actua Soccer, but US Gold's Olympic licence is certainly the easiest footy game to play and get to grips with. In no time at all you'll be scoring goals just like the pros.



4 NFL Gameday

Runs Madden NFL '97 a close second, and really shouldn't be discounted if you're looking to buy a game of this type. There's just about everything you could want in there and it's only second best due to poor presentation.

5 Total NBA '96

Sony shows everyone else how to do a basketball game with this stunning-looking re-creation of five on five hoop action. It's not as instantly gratifying as Konami's NBA In the Zone, but does provide a more fulfilling, long lasting challenge.

Also recommended
NHL Faceoff
NBA Jam Extreme
Actua Soccer
NHL '97
NBA Live '97



1 Worms **APPROVED**

Does wonders for the reputation of this much maligned genre by proving that strategy games can be fun. Guide your team of hermaphrodites to ultimate victory using missiles, grenades and land mines!

2= X-COM:

Terror from the Deep

One of the best video game sequels ever sees you battling with an underwater alien invasion. The most involved challenge yet from the king of strategy, MicroProse.

2= Command & Conquer

In Steve's opinion, it's probably the best all-round PlayStation game so far. It offers frantic action, mind bending strategy and incredible value for money. It should be bought, played and cherished by everyone who loves a good game.



4 X-COM

This perfect conversion of the popular PC smash hit caught the imagination of PlayStation owners not through its next generation looks, but through its compelling storyline and thoughtful yet tense and exciting brand of action. Like its sequel, it needs a PlayStation mouse for bitch-slapping the alien forces.



5 Sim City 2000

It would be nice to see an original PlayStation strategy game, because so far all the best ones have been conversions from other formats. This is another, and once again it proves that this type of thing can not only be produced on the PC, but on the PlayStation too.

Also recommended
Theme Park
AIV Evolution Global
Panzer General
Space Hulk



1 Resident Evil **APPROVED**

If an all-out gore fest is your type of thing, look no further than Capcom's incredible Resident Evil for your regular fix of zombie mayhem and puzzle solving. A genuinely enthralling adventure that you'll come back to time and again.

2 Tomb Raider

This tests both the PlayStation and the player to the limit. It's big, bold, scary and taxing. An all-round winner, from the graphics to the gameplay to the sound and back again.

3 Broken Sword

Adventure fans will absolutely cream over this. It's got just about everything you could ever want from a game of this type in plentiful amounts. Superb graphics, excellent soundtrack, plenty of humour and a great script.

4 Fade to Black

The only fault any of us could find with Electronic Arts' French developed adventure was that it's possibly too hard for some inexperienced players. If you're man enough to see it through, the rewards are well worthwhile.

5 Alone in the Dark: Jack is Back

In the mould of Resident Evil, but this isn't as good because it's a conversion of a PC game and doesn't make use of the PlayStation's technology as well as it should. A few niggles aside, it's got one of the best storylines around.

Also recommended
D
Cyberia
Myst
Time Commando
Discworld

FLIGHT SIM

1 Gunship **APPROVED**

MicroProse rightfully leads the field with this helicopter-based flight sim/strategy affair. Not the best-looking game on the PlayStation, but one of the most gripping and difficult.

2 Thunderhawk 2

Not technically as good as Gunship, but it's a little more exciting due to the all-out blasting action.

Also recommended
Top Gun
Air Combat
Warhawk



1 Crash Bandicoot **APPROVED**

Each level requires thought, skill and plenty of patience, whereas the main bulk of levels swing wildly from one viewpoint to another throwing overhead, first-person, side-on and other crazy angles into your face stunning you into submission.

2 Pandemonium

Perfect for platform fans who have seen everything else that's on offer and a game that will keep most players interested for at least a few weeks. Pandemonium is quite simply one of the best platform games of all time.



3 Rayman

With the exception of this game, the standard of platformers is poor at the moment. Plenty of people are busy trying to put this to rights, but for now Ubisoft's classic will fill the gap nicely.

4 Jumping Flash 2

Great fun to play, but still a little too easy and not all that much of an improvement over the original, really. Easily wins the award for most bizarre platform game, but doesn't really offer the experienced player a great deal more than they've already seen.

Also recommended
Johnny Bazzookatone
Mickey Mania
Jumping Flash
Earthworm Jim
Floating Runner
Gex

PUZZLE

3D Lemmings

There aren't all that many puzzlers around, so although this isn't great, it's still the best option for fans of more cerebral pursuits. It's testing enough, not only because of the puzzles, but because it's true 3D, and moving around can be confusing.

Also recommended
Bust A Move 2
Chessmaster 3D
Hebereke Poppolito



1 Die Hard Trilogy **APPROVED**

It doesn't do Fox Interactive's debut justice to stick it here with the pinball games, but it genuinely doesn't fit into any one category. A perfect blend of shooting (both Virtua Cop and Fade to Black styles) and driving make this a brilliant game all round!

2 Pro Pinball

The best of the pinball offerings so far. Empire's effort can be justifiably criticised for only having one table, but when it looks as good as this, and is packed with so many features, it can be just about forgiven.

Also recommended
True Pinball
Extreme Pinball

RETRO



2 Namco Museum Volume 1 **APPROVED**

The better of the two Namco offerings so far, this one features some real classic arcade games. This retro stuff isn't to everyone's taste, but it does bring back some very happy memories for anyone old enough to remember these halcyon days of gaming.

Also recommended
Williams Arcade Greatest
Namco Museum Volume 2

GAMES TO AVOID



Aquanaut's Holiday
Extreme Pinball
Street Fighter: The Movie
Lone Soldier
Galaxian 3
Cyberspeed
Novastorm
Off World Interceptor
In the Hunt
Any import you haven't seen reviewed in PlayStation Pro

NEXT MONTH

Sentient

*Space-monkey RPG bonanza
ahoy! Psygnosis guides this role
playing treat into our next issue
for a full review*

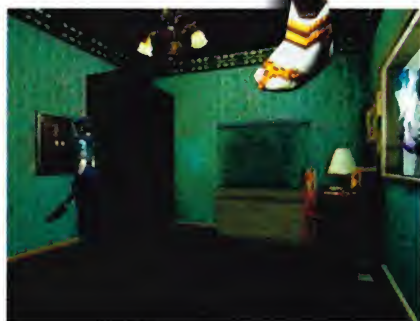
Virtual Pool

*Chalk your cue, put down your
pint and get ready to go baize
crazy as Interplay drags this pub
favourite onto your console*



Soul Blade

*Forget Tekken 2, erase all memory
of Star Gladiator, Street Fighter
Alpha 2 and Tohshinden, and pre-
pare yourself as the ultimate com-
bat game on earth finally arrives*



Suikoden

*Another RPG, but this time it's a
bizarre Japanese adventure from the
chaps at Konami that's being put
under our review spotlight*

Mass Destruction

*BMG Interactive follows up the suc-
cess of Pandemonium and Fire &
Klawd with this miniature tank com-
bat simulation*

Resident Evil 2

*Capcom unearths the devil once
again as we all go evil zombie mad,
slap bang in the middle of a cop
shop. In Japan. Or something*

ALSO NEXT ISSUE

Rage Racer

Actua Soccer Club Edition

Grid Run



Street Fighter 3

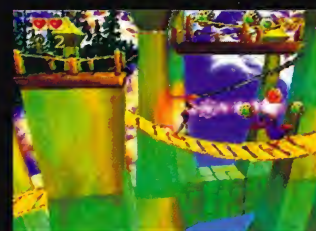
Ninja

Swagman



Crusader: No Remorse

Pandemonium guide



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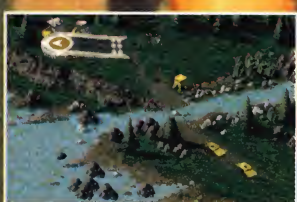
PLAYSTATION PRO

February issue out February 13

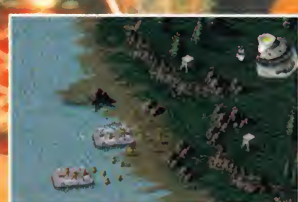
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